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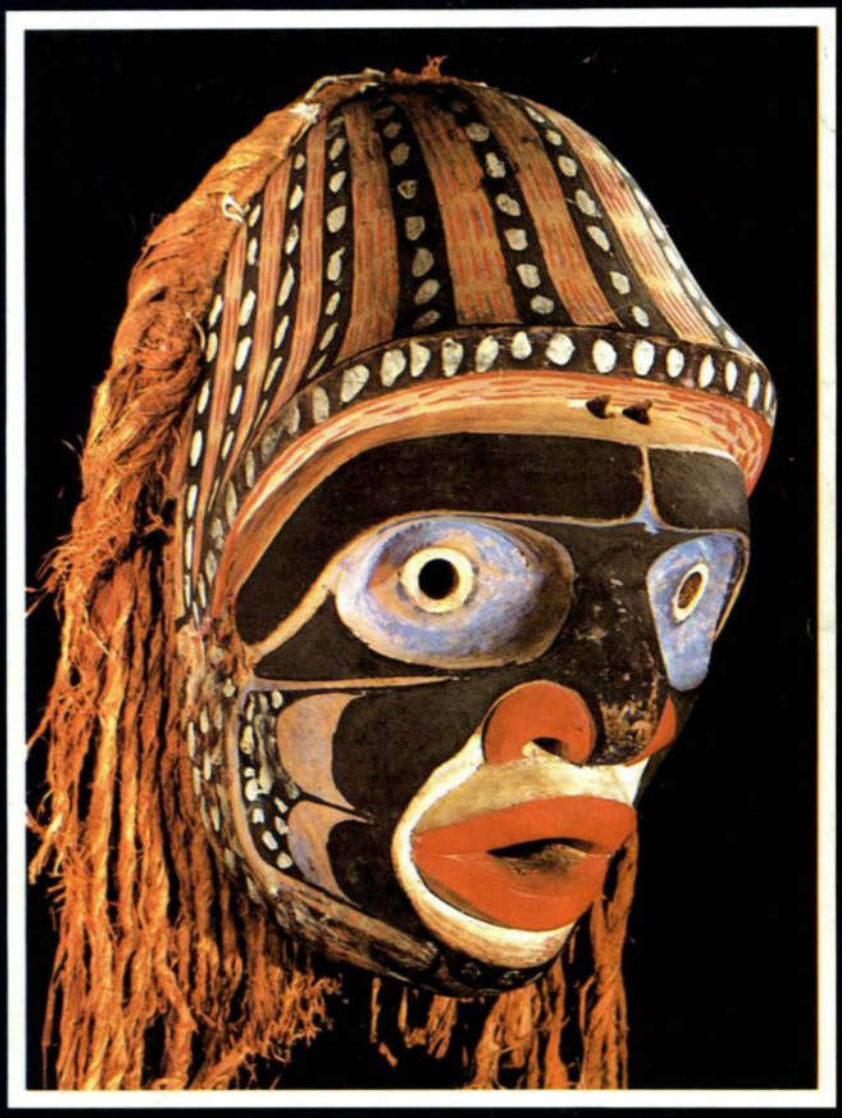

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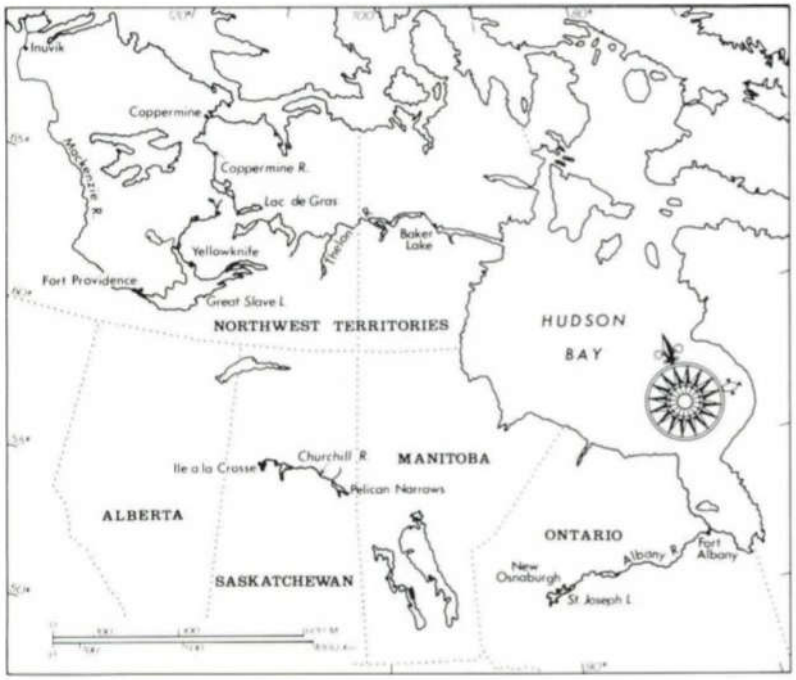

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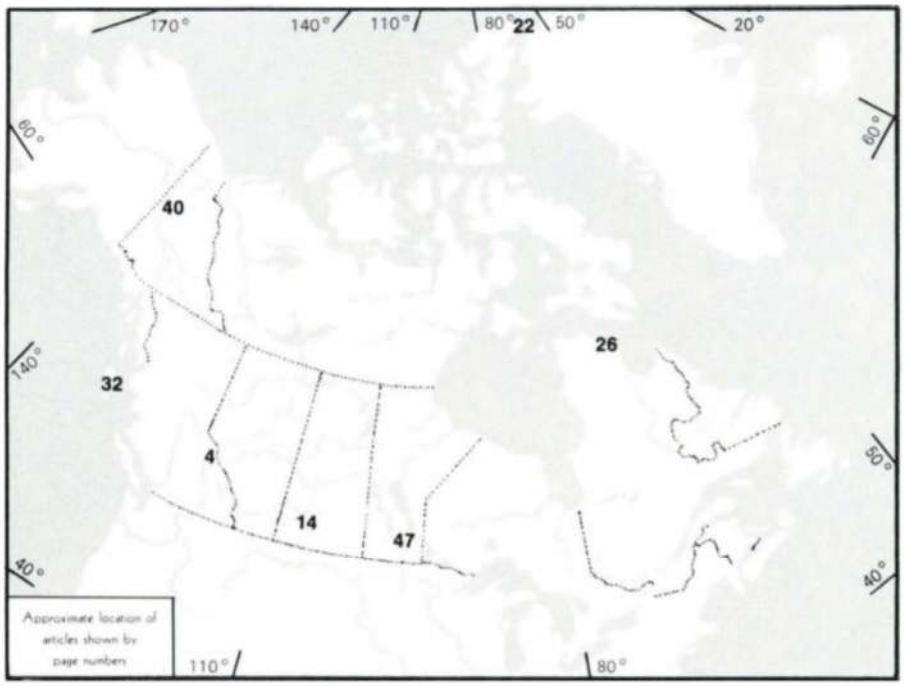

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COVER: Bella Coola Mask. Collected by C. F. Newcombe in 1913. Reproduced by permission of the Ethnology Division, British Columbia Provincial Museum.

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An Iroquois in western Indian clothing was painted by Alfred Jacob Miller in 1837, probably at the Green River Rendezvous. Reproduced by courtesy of the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.

The Iroquois and the Fur Trade of the Far West

By Theodore J. Karamanski

THE IROQUOIS INDIANS are known to history for their successful political structure, their warlike ferocity, and their far-ranging military campaigns. All of these attributes they used to compete with the English colonists and French Canadians for control of the fur trade of the Old Northwest. However, many of the major historians of the fur trade (Paul C. Phillips, Hiram M. Chittenden, and Harold A. Innis) fail to consider the role of the Iroquois Indians in the fur trade after the fall of New France in 1760. This is an exciting and interesting chapter of western history, for the same qualities of energy and daring which made the Iroquois a factor in the fur trade of colonial America, were inherited by the descendants of those warriors.

In the years following the Treaty of Paris, independent Scottish, American, and Canadian traders pushed deep into the far Northwest. Their routes took them up the Saskatchewan River to the foothills of the Rockies and up the Churchill River into the Athabasca Country. Eventually most of these 'peddlers' coalesced into a single firm, the North West Company. From 1784 until 1821, the North West Company engaged in a bitter trade war with the London-based Hudson's Bay Company. The competition was intense and occasionally violent, with the resources of both concerns strained to the breaking point.

It was under these circumstances that the Iroquois again became a factor in the North American fur trade. The North West Company sent the first Iroquois west as voyageurs. The Iroquois were efficient canoemen; they were, after generations of commercial and military excursions, familiar with the waters of the western Great Lakes, and unlike many tribes, they had no aversion to venturing far from their homelands. Furthermore, competition increased the demand for experienced frontiersmen and the Iroquois would bolster the ranks of the Canadian engagés.

This trickle of Iroquois westward increased substantially in the 1790s when several hundred Iroquois were also engaged by the North West Company as trappers and hunters. This new arrangement was more to the liking of the Iroquois, who were accustomed to operating on their own. They would sign contracts for up to three years and in exchange for being outfitted, the Iroquois would trade the furs they trapped to the North West Company. Thus the North West Company was able to procure a large number of furs over and above what the native Indians brought in, while the Iroquois had the opportunity to tap new fur territory and the freedom to come and go as they pleased. This arrangement was favourable for the Iroquois on two levels: economic and cultural. First, it allowed them to trap far afield of their own, long-overhunted, homeland. Second, it gave the restless young men of the tribes a chance to fulfil, on these far-ranging expeditions, the traditional role of hunter-warrior. There were declining opportunities to exercise that role in eastern North America, especially in the early nineteenth century, when the frontier passed upstate New York and Upper Canada.

The majority of the Iroquois who went west were from the Jesuit-founded settlements along the St Lawrence River. Principal among these was the Jesuit mission of Caughnawaga, founded during the bitter Anglo-French colonial rivalry. Its dual purpose had been to save the souls of hostile Iroquois and upon converting them to Catholicism, win them to the French cause as well. In this the Jesuits were amazingly successful; Francis Parkman contended that by 1700 as many as two-thirds of the Mohawk tribe had joined the mission. Yet even in the colonial period the Caughnawaga Iroquois displayed an inclination toward economic adventurism. They sacrificed absolute loyalty to any of the competing white factions in order to serve as middlemen between the Anglo-Dutch traders of Albany and the distant tribes of Wisconsin and Minnesota: the Sac, Fox, and Sioux. These colonial forays were mere preludes to what was to follow.

From the fragmented sources of trading post journals and explorers' narratives, the westward expansion of Iroquois trappers may be traced. In 1794 Duncan McGillivray reported '3 Iroquois now engaged in the Company's Service' on a tributary of the Saskatchewan River near the present site of

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HBC Collection

Governor George Simpson on a tour of inspection, from a painting by L. L. FitzGerald. When Simpson toured Rupert's Land in 1841, his boat crew, generally picked from the best of the voyageur class, was made up principally of Iroquois.

Prince Albert. By 1797 they had worked their way a good 250 miles further up the Saskatchewan to Buckingham House, where Peter Fidler, pioneer surveyor, noted their comings and goings. A year later David Thompson witnessed a motley group of Indian trappers, at least half of them Iroquois:

> Part of these went up the Red Deer River, and about 250 of them came up the Saskatchewan River, in company with the canoes of the Fur Traders to one of the upper posts called Fort Augustus [near present-day Edmonton, Alberta].

The expansion continued, to the north, and further west. By the beginning of the nineteenth century they had reached the Athabasca District and in 1803 Peter Fidler reported 'a party of 110 Iroquois up the Peace River and near the Rocky Mountain'.

As the Iroquois pushed further west they entered the new environment of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains. Their hunting techniques, even modes of travel, had to be transformed if they were to survive in the far West.

While the reorientation process was difficult for all Iroquois, for some it was tragically fatal. David Thompson vividly described the problems of a group of Iroquois in the Edmonton area. They approached the task of hunting buffalo with an unfortunate mixture of bravado and imprudence, with the inevitable result of one man injured and another killed; 'these two accidents somewhat lowered their pride.' Still the lack of success with the buffalo continued, followed by a near-fatal encounter with a grizzly bear. Initially the Iroquois were prone to claim that these misfortunes were the work of the Algonquins who 'had thrown bad medicine on them.' But eventually they realized the 'accidents were the fault of their mode of hunting, being accustomed to hunting only timid animals. . . . they were faulty in their hunting until experience taught them better.'

A further factor in the western environment was the Plains Indian, whose martial prowess impressed even the Iroquois. Initially the Blackfoot, Cree, and other Plains tribes befriended the somewhat displaced Iroquois trappers. But the Gros Ventres (the Atsina) were bellicose from the beginning. On one occasion the Gros Ventres invited a passing brigade of Iroquois, 75 trappers strong, into their village. While they engaged in a heated form of gambling, a quarrel broke out. When the dust cleared, 25 Iroquois were dead. The survivors, upon reaching Fort Augustus,

were all for a retaliatory attack. Fortunately a band of Plains Cree dissuaded the outnumbered Iroquois. Nonetheless the Gros Ventres continued to prey upon small groups of Iroquois as they split into small groups of three or four to lay their beaver traps.

In 1802 Peter Fidler, while working his way down the South Saskatchewan River, discovered the rotting bodies of two Iroquois, victims of a Gros Ventres atrocity the previous year. Fidler reports:

> . . . fourteen Irroque Indians and two more Canadians . . . came within six days walk of our house [Chesterfield House], four Irroquis and the two Canadians came ahead to make friends with the Fall Indians [the Gros Ventres]. The day before they came to the house which was Saturday a small party of Fall Indians killed two of the Irroques who went to their tents to give presents and make friends. The two Canadians and the other two Irroques came forward (not knowing the fate of the other two men) and slept in some Blackfeet tents only four miles from our house, who are very friendly to them. . . . The two Irroques gave several presents to the Fall Indians, and they said that they was very sorry for killing the two men and that they might go to the house with great safety, and further than they would conduct them safe thither; but they had not left the Blackfeet tents above ½ mile when they was killed and scalped also by the Fall Indians, and their bodies very full of stabs.

This was only the beginning of the Iroquois trouble with the western tribes.

Joining the Iroquois in these westward treks were trappers from other eastern tribes. Although generally they are merely referred to as Algonquins, a few journalists specifically mention Nipissing and Abenaki trappers. Peter Fidler came across a band of Indians in central Saskatchewan, whom he called the Bungees. These in reality were the Plains branch of the Chippewa, far from their home near the Great Lakes; nonetheless they were industriously trapping beaver.

However, the most numerous and noteworthy eastern Indians in the West were the Iroquois. Their absolute numbers are hard to estimate at any one time. In a North West Company report submitted to His Majesty's Government in 1802, only '80 [to] 100 Canadians and Iroquois Hunters' are mentioned. Yet in 1801 William Tomison of the Hudson's Bay Company claimed that the North West and XY (another Montreal-based fur concern) Companies had imported over three hundred 'Eroquees or Mohawk Indians' into the Saskatchewan River area in that summer alone. This of course makes no mention of those who had moved west during the 1790s. Hence the numbers involved in the westward migration of these Iroquois are obscured.

The ecological consequences of the western Iroquois are more easily determined. Like most western trappers, both American and Canadian, the Iroquois were spurred by the profit motive, and working land that was not their own, they adopted trapping techniques which stripped the swamps and streams of beaver, prime and worthless pelts alike. David Thompson remarked on their habit of moving westward 'as they destroyed the Beaver of one area', while William Tomison likewise noted that the Iroquois left 'nothing wherever they come'.

This practice rendered them unpopular in areas where the native tribes also participated in the fur trade. Daniel Harmon, of the North West Company, accurately described this situation:

> The Natives of the country, consider them [the Iroquois] as intruders. As they are mere rovers, they do not feel the same interest, as those who permanently reside here, in keeping the stock of animals good, and therefore they make great havock among the game, destroying alike the animals which are young and old. A number of Iroquois have passed several summers on this side of the mountain, which circumstance they know to be displeasing to the Indians here, who have often threatened to kill them, if they persisted in destroying the animals on their lands.

In this particular case the local Indians, Carriers, actually did resort to violence to rid themselves of the Iroquois. Two Carriers slipped into an Iroquois camp and dispatched, as they slept, a trapper, his wife, and their two children.

In 1814 the fur and game resources of even the vaunted Athabasca District were, in the words of one trader, 'dwindling down to nothing'. The cause of this situation was perceived by the white men to be the reckless hunting methods of the Iroquois. The local Chipewyan Indians were so dissatisfied that they plotted to expel all the fur traders from the area.

The Iroquois also followed the profit motive in their dealings with rival fur companies. Although the Iroquois had been brought west by the North West Company, many of them showed no hesitation in exercising their right as free trappers to join the Hudson's Bay Company upon the termination of their contracts. By 1818 it was becoming obvious that the Hudson's Bay Company was expanding its western operations and cutting into the North West Company's profits. As their fathers had done during the French and English rivalry, many Iroquois risked the charge of infidelity and accepted the economic benefits of being on the winning side.

In 1819 a party of Iroquois trappers pushed up the Peace River and across the Rocky Mountains into New Caledonia which had, until then, been the sole

McCord Museum, McGill University, Montreal

'The Leather Pass, Rocky Mountains', a water-colour by William G. R. Hind. It is better-known as the Yellowhead Pass, after Pierre Hatsinaton or 'Tete Jaune', the mixed-blood Iroquois trapper who first used the pass as an avenue to the untouched beaver lands of the Pacific Slope.

preserve of the Nor'Westers. The purpose of the party was to 'prepare the Natives of that Country for a favorable reception' of the Hudson's Bay Company. That winter the Iroquois conducted Ignace Giasson, a Hudson's Bay clerk, on a similar mission. They distributed among the native tribes, 'Goods & Tobacco Gratiz with promises of their coming in force early in the Summer'. So important were the Iroquois in this proposed invasion that George Simpson, wrote, 'The Iroquois must be engaged without delay, I shall not limit you to terms, we absolutely need their services, and you will therefore make the best bargain you can'.

This proposed invasion of northern British Columbia was laid aside when the North West Company agreed to union with their old foe. The Iroquois continued to play an important role in the reorganized Company's operations in New Caledonia. The Reverend A. G. Morice notes that in 1826 they still made up a sizeable element of the Company's engagés in that district. The Iroquois were especially valued there because of their ability to make birch-bark canoes, a skill the native population lacked. Many of these men eventually married local women and settled in the area. In 1890 adventurer Warburton Pike came across some of their descendants, near Hudson Hope, British Columbia; others continued to rove, in the north reaching the Mackenzie River Valley.

The Iroquois were also active in the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Slope area, further to the south. David Thompson introduced them to the area in 1800. In that year he met in council a band of Piegans camped on the Bow River.

> We then spoke to him [the principal chief of the Piegans] about introducing a number of Iroquois and Saulteaux into this country near the mountains. We informed them that their own country was so very poor, as to be utterly incapable of maintaining them, for which reason they had applied to us to bring them up to the mountains. . . . We also added that those Indians would behave quietly, would reside in the woody hills at the foot of the mountains and serve as a barrier between the Piegans and their enemies. Upon these terms they gave us permission to bring them up as soon as we pleased. We cut a pipe of tobacco to each man and gave of mixed rum to drink.

It did not take the Iroquois long to follow up this invitation. Within a few years they were laying their traps all along the slopes of the Canadian Rockies. At a time when white men were still seeking the major passes across the mountains, Iroquois, Saulteaux, and Nipissing trappers were slipping over the high slopes into the virgin land to the west. The Iroquois figured prominently in the discovery of two of the most important passes through the Rockies.

Yellowhead Pass, through which the Canadian National Railway and Alberta Highway No 16 cross the Rocky Mountains, was named for the mixed-blood Iroquois trapper who used the pass as an avenue to the untouched beaver lands of the Pacific Slope. He crossed the divide some time after 1800 and erected a temporary storage shelter, or cache, for his furs. Later HBC travellers recalled this when they referred to the pass as Tête Jaune Cache.

The Iroquois were also instrumental in the opening of the Athabasca Pass, the gateway to the Hudson's Bay Company's Columbia River Department. In December of 1810, David Thompson was struggling in the foothills of the Rockies, avoiding the hostile Piegan war parties who had deterred him from crossing the mountains via Howse Pass. He was concerned with crossing the mountains in order to reach the mouth of the Columbia River before a rival party of American traders (the Astorians). Thompson proposed to try to push towards a little-known pass that lay out of the range of the Piegan Indians. Fortunately he was able to engage an Iroquois, called Thomas, to serve as guide. Thomas was no doubt one of those trappers whose access to the mountains had been secured by David Thompson ten years before. By 10 January 1811, the Iroquois had guided Thompson to the foot of the pass. Through a frozen alpine setting, they struggled upward between massive walls of ice, and snow that threatened an avalanche. When the Iroquois finally led them to the summit, they found the snow more than twenty-five feet deep. Together, Thompson and the Iroquois guide had successfully blazed the trail which would be the major overland route to the Pacific for the next thirty years.

However, David Thompson was less successful with his immediate goal, and when he finally reached the mouth of the Columbia, he found the Americans established at Astoria. The Americans had won the race to the Columbia, but with Royal Navy support, the North West Company soon expelled them, and established a trade monopoly in the entire river valley. To prosecute this trade the Company established roving fur brigades to scour the countryside in search of pelts. These brigades were composed of a wonderfully cosmopolitan crew: French-Canadians, Americans, English, Abenaki, Cree, Nipissing, Hawaiians, and of course, Iroquois.

The first Iroquois to reach the Columbia was Ignace Shonowane. He had deserted the North West Company post at the Spokane River in 1812 to join what was then the American post at the Columbia River's mouth. He was probably the first of his tribe to cross the continent. Many of his brothers followed — so many in fact, that by 1818 they made nearly a third of the Company's employees in the District.

In the Columbia District the Iroquois had a difficult time. They were continuously at odds with both their employers and the local Indians. Because so few of the Iroquois had brought wives westward with them, they often slipped away from the Company post at dusk to meet with the daughters of the neighboring tribes. These nocturnal visits would often result in the squandering of many of the tools of the trapper's trade: steel traps, guns, knives, and blankets — goods the Company would later have to replace for the trapper.

Peter Skene Ogden, while in the Columbia District, witnessed the ill effects of these activities. An Iroquois trapper was killed in a scuffle over a Cowlitz Indian woman. Angry and eager for redress, the Iroquois reported the matter to James Keith, the North West Company's District Commander. Perhaps bowing to their pressure, Keith dispatched Ogden, then a young clerk, with a band of thirty Iroquois to look into the murder. Ogden's Iroquois entered the Cowlitz camp firing their guns and they were not restrained until twelve Cowlitz were dead. The slain Iroquois had been avenged.

A few years later the North West Company had even more serious trouble with the Iroquois. By this time, the Columbia District had a new commander, Donald Mackenzie. One of the problems Mackenzie tried to overcome was the illegal trade that the Iroquois were carrying out with the local Indians. On one occasion Mackenzie became aware of a group of his Iroquois bartering with a local Indian for a horse. He stepped into the negotiations, bought the horse, and in a Highlander's rage, shot it dead, as a lesson to the Iroquois.

According to Alexander Ross, who observed the proceedings, the lesson was lost. The Iroquois withdrew with muttered threats and sullen looks and laid their plot of revenge. They would murder Mackenzie and upon seizing the supplies they needed, flee the country. But as the selected assassin approached Mackenzie's tent, the Scot was alerted by a loyal member of the Iroquois party and the assassin was disarmed. In spite of his narrow escape from death, Mackenzie treated the Iroquois conspirators gently, merely having them transferred out of that trapping brigade.

The Hudson's Bay Company, when it assumed control over this district after 1821, inherited these problems. Alexander Ross found the Iroquois a

troublesome element in his 1824 Snake Country Brigade. After having been allowed to trap independently of the rest of the brigade, the Iroquois were robbed by a band of Bannock Indians. Fortunately for the Iroquois they came upon a group of American trappers led by Jed Smith. Smith fitted them out with horses (in exchange for 105 beaver pelts) and escorted them to their rendezvous with Ross who was not pleased to see them. Whether the Iroquois realized it or not, Smith had used them as a means of entering Hudson's Bay Company territory, and spying on their operations and trade.

The Iroquois caused the Company further grief a year later. This time Peter Skene Ogden led the Snake Country Brigade. They advanced south from Flathead House to Ogden's Hole in the present state of Utah. Here they met up with a group of American trappers led by a turbulent mountain man, Johnson Gardner. The Americans crudely hoisted the Stars and Stripes and told Ogden to get out of United States territory. Gardner then told the Iroquois that since they were now out of British territory, their debts with the Hudson's Bay Company were annulled. The leaders of the Iroquois on this occasion were Pierre Tevanitagon and Ignace Hatchiorauguasha (also known as John Grey), both veteran trappers. The Iroquois assessed the situation and with the commercial sense that the Caughnawaga Iroquois had been demonstrating since 1700, chose to desert the Hudson's Bay Company. Twenty-three trappers in all deserted Ogden, a good portion of them Iroquois. The defection damaged that season's returns from the Snake Country.

At the same time George Simpson, who then supervised all the western districts, was having his own problems with the Iroquois. While inspecting the Columbia region, Simpson discharged a number of employees as being incompetent or untrustworthy. When he returned to Canada in 1825 he conducted many of these with him, including an Iroquois chief named Isaac. While crossing Athabasca Pass 'the Blackguard Iroquois' opened a keg of rum and soon had a good portion of the portage crew drunk. The Iroquois then, 'in a fit of drunken rage sent his Provisions down the Stream to lighten his burthen'. This was too much for Simpson who hurried back from the head of the column and assumed 'the disagreeable duty of Chastising him on the spot with the first Stick that came to hand, he will feel it for a few Days . . .' Simpson then grabbed a trade hatchet and dashed the remaining kegs of rum.

A more serious impeachment of Iroquois character came in 1843 from John McLoughlin, the patriarch of 'Old Oregon'. In that year his son, John McLoughlin Jr, was slain by a group of mutinous Canadian and Iroquois engagés. The incident seems to have begun when John McLoughlin Jr refused to allow his men to make any evening visits to the neighboring Indian encampments. The resentment this fostered boiled over when McLoughlin (most likely under the influence of rum) antagonized these men. In the darkness several shots were exchanged and when the smoke cleared McLoughlin lay dead.

With a father's grief blinding his judgement, John McLoughlin Sr was quick to blame the Iroquois. He referred to them as 'Villains' and as being 'always ready for mischief'. Governor Simpson backed the Iroquois being detained for the murder. He wrote: 'it was evident that some of those whites were anxious to fasten the charge upon the Iroquois'. This incident created a great deal of antipathy between McLoughlin and Simpson, while further darkening the Iroquois' reputation in the Northwest.

In the Columbia Department the Iroquois were not held in very high esteem. Alexander Ross's description probably represents the consensus among the Department's officers:

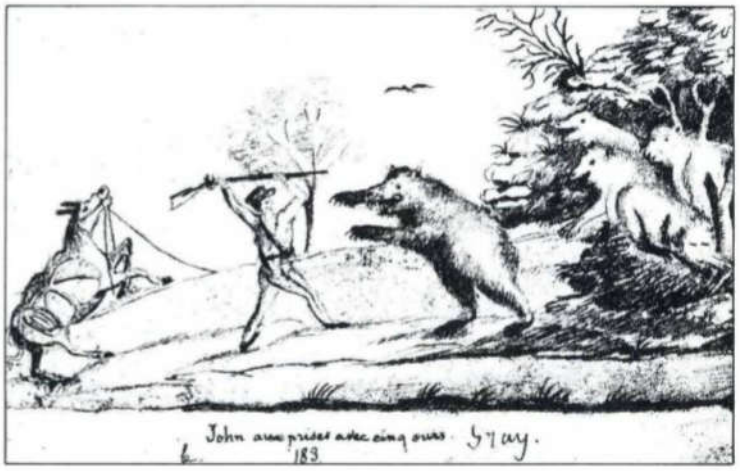
> They are sullen, indolent, fickle, cowardly, and treacherous; and an Iroquois arrived at manhood is still as wayward and extravagant as a lad of other nations at the age of fifteen.

This, however, is written from the point of view of the men sharing in the fur-trade monopoly. It does not take into consideration the attitudes of those men who occupied a considerably less advantageous role in the Department's economy. The Iroquois trappers, in spite of their low wages (allegedly lower than whites) sought to make a profit in the trade. They chafed under the Company's outfitting system that continually kept them in debt. Hence it should not have surprised the Hudson's Bay Company management that the Iroquois would desert their employ if given the opportunity.

The first defections from the Columbia Department came in 1822, when a group of trappers crossed the mountains and 'reached the American posts on the Yellowhead and Big Horn with much fur'. For the next few years there was most likely a trickle of desertions across the mountains. The major defection came in 1825 when Pierre Tevanitagon and John Grey led twenty-three free trappers, nearly all of them Iroquois, out of Ogden's camp and over to the Americans. John Grey, who seems to have had the benefit of an education before entering the fur trade, eloquently described to the Hudson's Bay Company the Iroquois' view of their desertion:

> I must tell you that all the Iroquois as well as myself have long wished for an opportunity to join the Americans & if we did not sooner it was owing to our bad luck in Not meeting with them, but now we go & all you Can Say Cannot prevent us . . . go

John Grey, prominent Iroquois trapper in the West. Sketches by Father Nicholas Point, from the Papers of P. J. DeSmet, Washington State University Libraries, Pullman, Washington.



> we will we are now in free Country & have Friends here to Support us & if every man in Camp Does not leave you they do not Seek their own interest.

After leaving the Hudson's Bay brigade the Iroquois headed east and in the summer they participated in the first Rocky Mountain Rendezvous. Pierre Tevanitagon led the Iroquois in their trade, and they must have been pleased with both the higher price they were being paid for beaver and the open atmosphere in which the trade was conducted. In any event Pierre ordered a stock of goods for the whole Iroquois contingent to be brought to the 1826 rendezvous.

Most of the Iroquois defectors now adopted the life-style of the Rocky Mountain trapper, whose free and wayfaring ways matched their own unrestrained inclinations. The map of the mountain states became dotted with the names of these Iroquois: Grey's River in Wyoming after John Grey, Goddin's River (now Big Lost River) in Idaho after Thyery Goddin, and of course, Pierre's Hole, a favorite rendezvous location, after Pierre Tevanitagon. But with the joys of a mountain man's life came the unrelenting dangers as well; major among those was the presence of the Blackfoot Indians.

The Blackfoot and their allies, the Gros Ventres, were the menace of the mountains. With a ferocity and determination that can only be compared with the Iroquois of the seventeenth century, they dominated a considerable portion of the northern plains and foothills on both sides of the 49th parallel and killed many a mountain man. The Iroquois had long been foes of the Gros Ventres while the Blackfoot had originally befriended the Iroquois. Nonetheless, after the Iroquois entered the Canadian Rockies after 1800, they had to hazard the harassment and thieving of the Piegans, a tribe of the Blackfoot alliance.

Some of the more notable Iroquois were casualties of this struggle with the Blackfoot. In 1827 Pierre Tevanitagon, while trapping with Robert Campbell at the head of the Jefferson River, was killed by a stalking band of Blackfoot as he 'had advanced too far' from the rest of the column. In 1830 Thyery Goddin, a mixed-blood Iroquois who had been among those to desert Ogden in 1825, fell victim to the Blackfoot near the Bear River. John Grey nearly suffered the same fate in 1832 when the Blackfoot ambushed him near Cache Valley. Grey's companion, David Montgomery, was slain, and Grey, weaponless and without his horse, only escaped by constructing a makeshift boat with his penknife, and floating down the Portneuf River to safety.

That same year, at the rendezvous, the Iroquois had a chance to settle some of these outstanding debts. While enjoying themselves in the valley named for their fallen leader, Pierre, they got wind of a party of Gros Ventres making their way up the valley. All the trappers — Iroquois, Flathead, and white — eager to settle old scores grabbed their rifles and headed off in pursuit. While both sides prepared for the fight, the Gros Ventres sent out a war chief to hold a peace conference. From the ranks of the mountain men, a Flathead Indian and one Antoine Goddin emerged. The Flatheads were traditional foes of the Blackfoot, while Antoine Goddin was the Iroquois mixed-blood whose father the Blackfoot had slain two years before. Together they sealed a pact of vengeance. When the Gros Ventre chief extended his hand in friendship, Goddin grasped it and pulled the chief off balance, while the Flathead thrust his rifle forward, shooting the chief at point-blank range. Thirty more Gros Ventres died before the Battle of Pierre's Hole was finished.

Antoine Goddin paid for this bit of vengeance four years later, in 1836. He was at this time working for Nathaniel Wyeth at Fort Hall. While engaged in his

Smithsonian Institution, Photo 37416-E

Charles LaMousse, son of 'Old Ignace', a leader of the Iroquois among the Flatheads. From a drawing by Gustavus Sohon, dated June 1854.

duties he was hailed from across the river by a 'renegade' trapper who was living among the Gros Ventres. Goddin crossed the river and upon entering into trade with this man, was shot in the back by the Gros Ventres. They left his scalped and mutilated body as a warning to others.

The Iroquois also figured prominently in the last major scuffle between the mountain men and the Blackfoot. In June of 1838 Jim Bridger led a band of trappers into the heart of Blackfoot territory. Because of the ravages of smallpox they encountered few living Blackfoot until they reached the Madison River. Near a Blackfoot village the trappers got involved in a fire fight. Both sides stayed under cover, squeezing off a few shots in the general direction of their foes. This all changed when one of the Blackfoot suggested that the trappers should dress like women, since they fought that way. This insult touched to the quick an Iroquois in Bridger's party, and he 'began to utter the shrill war cry of his nation'. This cry, 'the sound which had been the death warrant of so many whites during the old French war', galvanized the trappers into action. They followed the Iroquois in a deadly assault upon the Blackfoot, and swept the enemy before them. The next day the Blackfoot imprudently tried to dispute the trappers' passage again. This time the Iroquois led thirty or so trappers around the Blackfoot flank, before he 'sallied forth with a horrid yell' routing the Indians again.

Not all of the Iroquois encounters with the Indians of the American West were bloody. Their staunchest allies were the Flatheads and Nez Perce who often received them hospitably. At an early date the Iroquois took their daughters as wives, and some Iroquois were adopted into the tribe. These Iroquois who joined the Flatheads and Nez Perce played an important role in the course of history. Around the winter council fires, the Iroquois would tell their hosts the tale of the babe who was born in the poverty of a stable, well over a thousand years before. They spoke of his message of salvation, and of his second coming. Baffled yet intrigued, they would ask the Iroquois how to pray to him, and the trappers would recall the words the 'black robes' had taught them many years and miles ago.

Christianity had remained an important element in the lives of the wayfaring Iroquois trappers. Although their Catholic background at Caughnawaga was somewhat mixed with a few persistent pagan practices, the Iroquois seem to have had a religious framework at least as strong as that of their pale-skinned partners in the trade. Alexander Ross noted that the Iroquois sang 'hymns oftener than paddling songs'.

Important in this aspect of Iroquois history was the old trapper Ignace LaMousse. Ignace came west from Caughnawaga sometime between 1812-1820. After a career as a trapper and voyageur he married a Flathead woman and settled with that tribe. He taught the Flatheads the outward forms of Catholicism: prayers, observance of Sunday, and other rudiments. Further, he sought to explain the religion's more mystic and complex beliefs. In time he felt the need of a priest, as his own children were growing to maturity and had not yet been baptized. It was therefore mostly through his offices that the Flatheads and Nez Perce sent a delegation to St Louis in 1831, to bring a missionary to the Northwest.

The Jesuits in St Louis, in the midst of founding the university there, were too weak to undertake the mission; and the immediate result of the 1831 journey was failure. (It was, however, this Flathead delegation, a response to Iroquois proselytizing, which would eventually lead Marcus and Narcissa Whitman west.) 'Old Ignace' was not discouraged. In 1835 he set out for St Louis with a party which included his two sons whom Ignace wished to have baptized. The boys were baptized Charles and Francis LaMousse on 2 December but again, no missionary returned. Two years later 'Old Ignace' headed a combined Flathead-Nez Perce delegation to St Louis. On their journey they fell in with William Gray, a Protestant minister returning from Oregon. The joint party was intercepted by Sioux on the South Platte River. The Sioux ordered the white men to separate themselves

from the Indians, if they wished to be spared. 'Old Ignace', dressed in the white man's clothes, could have escaped safely. Instead he died with his companions, and is remembered as the 'Apostle of the Flatheads'.

Finally in 1839 'Young Ignace', another member of the Iroquois tribe among the Flatheads, led a delegation east. This time they were successful. Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet returned with them to the Flathead country in 1840.

Nor was it merely among the Flathead that the Iroquois acted on their religious beliefs. Father DeSmet found a Kootenay Indian band that had been instructed in Christianity by 'the wife of an Iroquois, who had resided for thirty years with this tribe'. Similar was the case of those Iroquois who had remained trappers in the Canadian Rockies. In 1845 Father DeSmet met 'an old Iroquois called Louis Kwaragkante' who with thirty members of his family was trapping on the shores of Lake Jasper. For forty years Kwaragkante had not seen a priest, yet his children knew their prayers in Iroquois.

These western Iroquois welcomed the 'Black Robes', but they did not get along well with the Protestant missionaries who helped bring Christianity to the Northwest: Jason Lee, Samuel Parker and Marcus Whitman. In 1836 Samuel Parker, a Congregational minister, passed an Indian graveyard which was dotted by rudely made crosses, the work of Catholic Iroquois. Parker, incensed by this 'stepping-stone to idolatry', grasped one of the crosses, and 'broke it to pieces', instructing the Indians 'we place a stone at the head and foot of the grave only to mark the place.' Five years later, an Iroquois mixed-blood named Joe Grey caused the Whitmans considerable tribulation. From April of 1841 until September, Grey opposed them, telling the local Cayuse Indians that they should make the Whitmans pay for the land occupied by the mission site and reject their Protestant teachings. His agitations contributed to the undermining of the missionaries' position among the Cayuse. Perhaps in a way, Grey helped pave the way for the Whitman massacre in 1847.

By 1850 the Iroquois had spread out across the continent. As trappers they had opened some of the major passes through the Canadian Rockies, avenues which would figure prominently in the settler's frontier — which was quickly catching up with the fur trade. As canoemen they had few peers. Governor George Simpson referred to one of his Iroquois voyageurs as 'nearly aquatic'. When Simpson toured Rupert's Land in 1841, his boat crew, generally picked from the best of the voyageur class, was made up principally of Iroquois. In this capacity the Iroquois ranged as far as the Arctic Ocean. An Iroquois voyageur served, although less than honourably, on John Franklin's first Arctic land

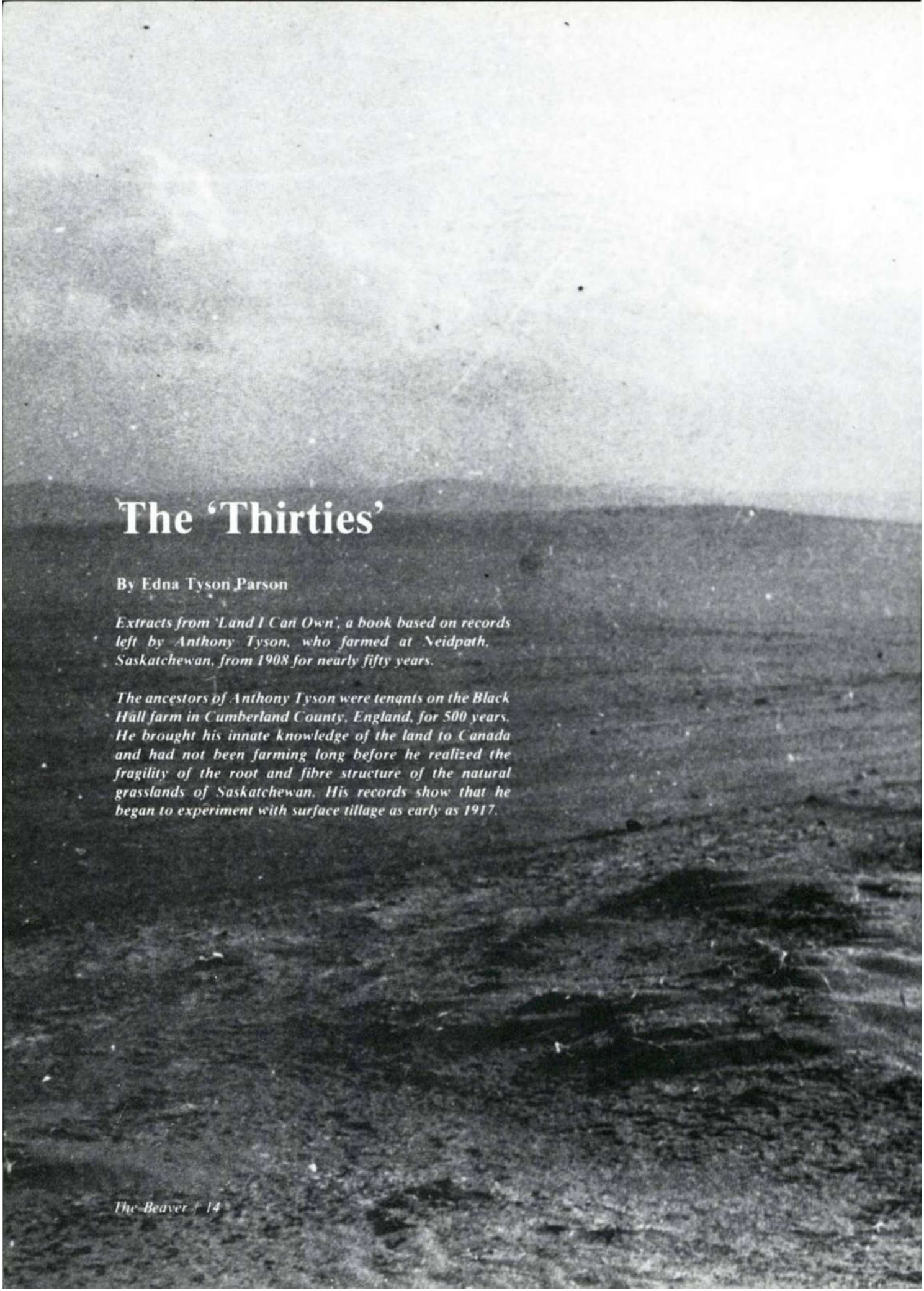
Smithsonian Institution Photo 37416-G

'Young Ignace' or 'Little Ignace', leader of a delegation to St Louis which succeeded in bringing missionary Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet to the Flathead country in 1840. From a drawing by Gustavus Sohon, dated 16 May 1854.

expedition. Three Iroquois were also included in a hand-picked crew of voyageurs for James Anderson's Franklin search expedition. In their role as amateur missionaries, the Iroquois helped to speed the Christianity of the Northwest.

By the mid-nineteenth century the fur frontier, even in Canada, was disintegrating. The fate of the western Iroquois in these changing times was similar to that of the white free trapper. Some men became guides for government explorers, emigrant wagon trains, and foreign sportsmen. John Grey served as a guide, as far as the Green River, for the Bidwell-Bartleson California Overland Party. In the Canadian Rockies Sandford Fleming was aided through the mountains by Iroquois guides, as was the Milton and Cheadle survey party. Others accepted the closing of the frontier and settled down, often on independent ranches or small farms. John Grey led a group of twelve Iroquois families to the small mixed-blood settlement of Kansas in 1836. This nearly doubled the population of the town, which would later grow into Kansas City.

The majority of the western Iroquois married into the various western tribes. The families they founded would be only vaguely Iroquois. For a generation they would hang onto a few threads of their past, their religion and perhaps a smattering of the Iroquois language, before blending in with the native population. ◆

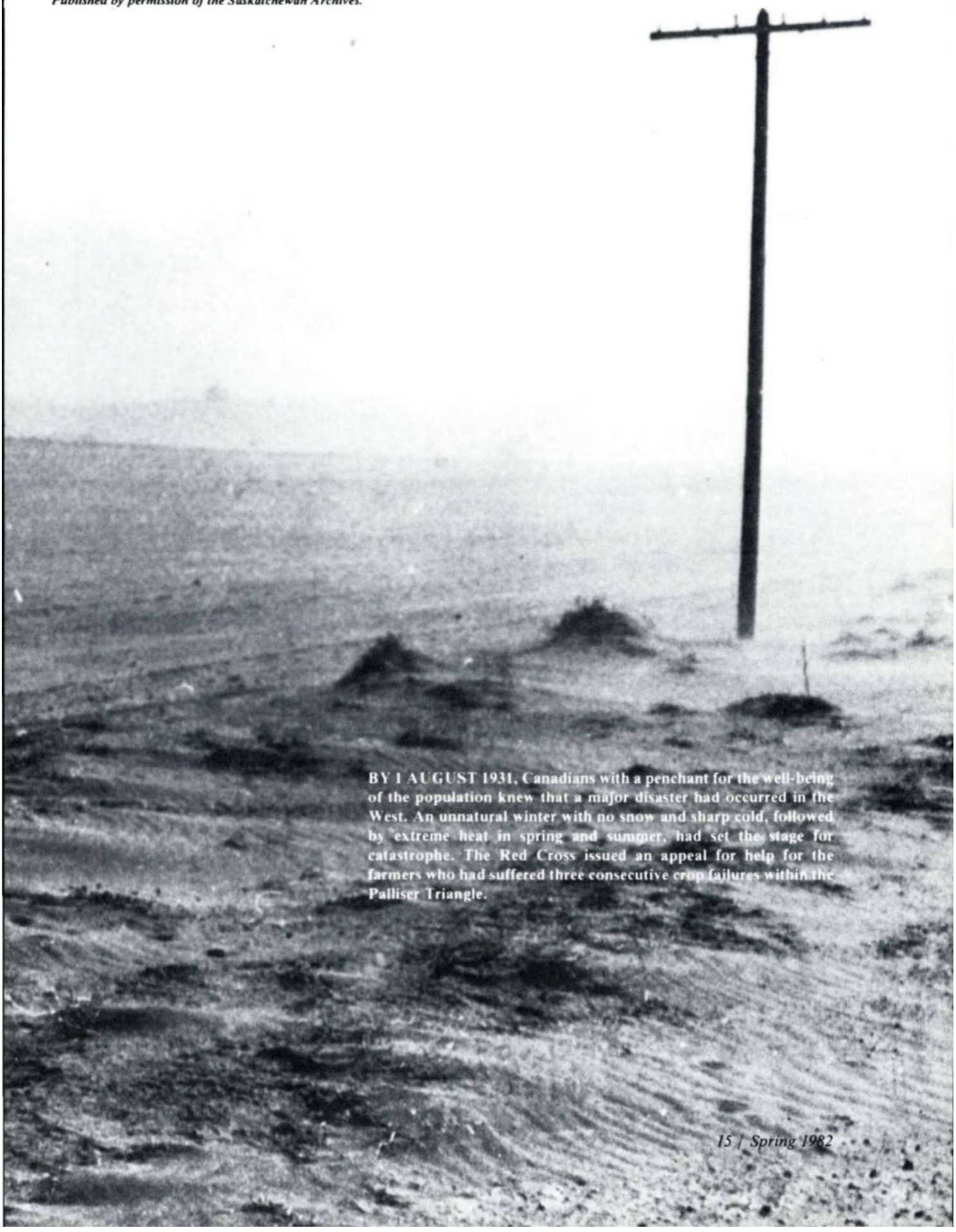


The 'Thirties'

By Edna Tyson Parson

Extracts from 'Land I Can Own', a book based on records left by Anthony Tyson, who farmed at Neidpath, Saskatchewan, from 1908 for nearly fifty years.

The ancestors of Anthony Tyson were tenants on the Black Hall farm in Cumberland County, England, for 500 years. He brought his innate knowledge of the land to Canada and had not been farming long before he realized the fragility of the root and fibre structure of the natural grasslands of Saskatchewan. His records show that he began to experiment with surface tillage as early as 1917.



Dust storm, southern Saskatchewan, 1934.
Published by permission of the Saskatchewan Archives.

BY 1 AUGUST 1931, Canadians with a penchant for the well-being of the population knew that a major disaster had occurred in the West. An unnatural winter with no snow and sharp cold, followed by extreme heat in spring and summer, had set the stage for catastrophe. The Red Cross issued an appeal for help for the farmers who had suffered three consecutive crop failures within the Palliser Triangle.

Proud and independent people suffered the humiliation of having to apply for relief. Vouchers issued for a family of five and their animals for a six-month period were as follows:

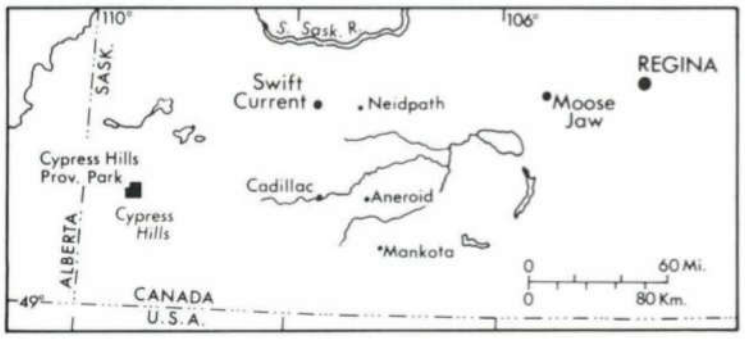
Food	$66.02
Feed	54.19
Clothing	43.68
Feed and Fodder	113.94
	$277.83

There was no opportunity to shop for bargains with a relief voucher; it had to be cashed and spent in its entirety in one store. Therefore, a relief recipient was obliged to shop for clothing and footwear in a department store.

For farmers in the Neidpath (Saskatchewan) area, the Coulee Municipality sponsored a make-work project during the winter of 1930-31. When the Canadian National Railway line had come into Neidpath, the road-bed had been continued up the flat to Swift Current, but tracks had never been laid. Coulee Municipality offered farmers, within six miles of the track, the opportunity of laying track at the rate of thirty cents an hour. Meals and bunkhouse were provided; maximum earnings for each farmer were limited to fifty dollars.

Church groups in the East sent carloads of canned goods, vegetables, apples and salt cod. Here, some of their donations are unpacked at Neidpath, October 1937.

Collection of Edna Parson



Collection of Edna Parson

Anthony Tyson and his wife Rose, 1933.

Had it not been for the price of wheat, the West probably could have looked after itself for the next five years. Anthony Tyson's records show good crops in 1932 and 1935, but the price of wheat negated any advantage. According to the Crow's Nest Freight Rate set in 1897, in perpetuity, the farmer at Neidpath pays 23½ cents per one hundred pounds to have his grain hauled to the Lakehead. By the time charges for handling, dockage and storage come off, there is not much left when the price dips far below the dollar. In 1932 the price in Neidpath went down to 17 cents a bushel, but it fluctuated, and Anthony Tyson sold 3,500 bushels of wheat that year at an average price of 32 cents per bushel.

In the spring of 1933, the year the grasshoppers ate up $30 million worth of wheat in the West, Bernard Franz came to work for Anthony at an initial salary of $10 per month under the federal unemployment scheme. Bernard recalls that he was trying to run the cultivator with six horses on the school quarter and the horses absolutely refused to face the onslaught of grasshoppers coming in on the wind. The sun appeared red from the millions of wings high in the sky. In late July, Anthony and Bernard rushed to cut the oats in the south field, though they were still green. The hoppers had settled down in millions. The men worked till midnight loading those oat sheaves

Department of Resources and Economic Expansion

Grasshoppers in a field of wheat, 1961.

onto racks and tossing them into the loft to try to save some feed for the animals.

Later they were saved such frantic labour in the wheat field. Anthony walked out one evening at sunset to view his crop. It was still green but silhouetted against the sun were the black forms of hoppers sucking the juice from every stem. Dejected, Anthony turned home. This time the catastrophe was too immense for him. He could not save his wheat as he had saved the small field of oats. When he rose at dawn, he seemed to hear a ringing in his ears. He went outside and could not believe the scene before him. The sky was full of gulls. They had cleaned the hoppers off his wheat field.

J. B. Sabine [a Neidpath pioneer] also had a hopper and gull experience.

> We were summerfallowing on a mile stretch and as we got near the centre so there was only about a rod unplowed we noticed it was just one mass — for the mile — of hoppers. They were so thick, almost one on top of the other. They had jumped in there from where we had plowed, so we decided we should go to town and get some poison for them before we plowed that last rod in. If we plowed it in, they would be spread out on the other crop. So while we were sitting there talking about it, along came a lonely gull. He lit right alongside the plow. He looked around the ground and the hoppers were so thick he couldn't find a place to stand on, and he never picked up a hopper. So I said to my brother, "That is going some. That gull never even ate one." And while we were talking, this gull flew right up in the air and he almost disappeared. He was going round and round high as we could see him.
>
> And after a time he came back and he lit right down alongside the plow again and went to work eating hoppers. And we thought it was a very funny thing for him to do — come right back alongside of us. And first thing you know the gulls commenced to come in, and they came in in countless thousands and they came in on that there land for a mile stretch there.
>
> You couldn't put another gull in there hardly. We sat on our plows for quite awhile, perhaps an hour and watched the performance. Well, when they lifted up and went away, we went back to work plowing and in all that mile distance we couldn't find one hopper.

Diminished crops meant that it was not worthwhile for Hank Wilson to start his big threshing outfit. It rusted for ten years in William Lyne's farmyard, until it mysteriously disappeared during

the war. The small threshing outfits came back; the housewives cooked for threshers again.

Men and women put their ingenuity to work to create a balanced diet out of the produce at hand. They tried to make wheat into coffee but it still came out of the coffee pot looking more like porridge than coffee grounds and with a definite cracked-wheat flavour. Carrot jam was a staple. It was nutritious, but tiresome. Citron and marrow jam provided variety. The ubiquitous rhubarb was into everything — preserves, jam, pickles, pie, alone or paired with anything available. Rhubarb and saskatoons or rhubarb and strawberries took some of the edge off the rhubarb. When the cows got into a stinkweed patch, the milk and butter would be tainted and inedible. Stinkweed and Russian thistle thrived during the years of drought and drifting soil. Russian thistle was used as hay when all else failed.

Relief for men and animals had been organized and periodically came into Neidpath. Work parties to unload the supplies gathered in the Neidpath Community Hall and food was distributed from there. The East sent canned goods, vegetables, squash, pumpkins, apples and the controversial salt cod. Many people did not know what to do with it, and wondered why they had been sent something that they could not eat even when they boiled it all day. But folk from the Maritimes and the Norwegians knew it had to be well soaked first and then it was delicious. The Norwegians made lutefisk with it. When relief feed or hay came into town during a cold spell in the winter, the farmers had to face the elements or miss out on the feed because allocation was on a first-come first-serve basis. Waiting in a long line-up in -35° F. resulted in many frozen faces and fingers. But to save the lives of their animals, they endured the cold. Seed grain was sent in by the municipalities and the price was added to farm taxes but with successive debt adjustment acts some of these debts were postponed and eventually cancelled.

Because there was no money to keep machinery under repair, farmers made innovations. Anthony Tyson's use of a nail when he had no rivet resulted in a near tragedy. He had been cultivating on a hot day in July and left his outfit a minute while he went for a drink of water. The horse flies were bad and the horses started to move. He ran to catch them and jumped onto the cultivator but his knee hit a nail which replaced a broken rivet. The nail was rusty. He drove immediately to the house and Rosie applied first aid, but she could not reach the bottom of the wound. Though the air was stifling, Anthony started to have chills. By next day his jaw had clamped shut. He drove to Swift Current to visit a doctor; the doctor looked at his mouth, said it was his teeth and he could do nothing for him. Dan Tyson, a brother on a nearby homestead, had a big 'Home Doctor' book. Anthony phoned and asked him to look for lockjaw. Dan read that there are two kinds of lockjaw — the kind that takes two weeks for onset is fatal, the kind that comes on immediately is not. For the next few weeks Anthony ate soup through gaps in his side teeth. The muscles in his body seemed to be stiffened too, so that he bent over. But gradually his jaw muscles relaxed, and the neighbours made a joke of it. When he went to Chess Merrick at the blacksmith's shop he was greeted with 'How far can you open up today, Ant'ny?'

ANTHONY TYSON'S FARM STATISTICS 1930 to 1939

Year	Total Threshed (Bushels)	Seed etc. (Bushels)	Bushels Sold	Average Price	Total Selling Price	Oats Threshed (Bushels)
1930	1,700	388	1,312	$.38	$ 508.86	
1931	455	355	100	.90	90.00	
			(Wheat sold for seed)			
1932	3,825	325	3,500	.32	1,121.64	409
1933	734	300	434	.53	232.15	94
1934	2,172	350	1,822	.66	1,208.09	140
1935	4,879	379	4,500	.64	2,916.82	1,181
1936	1,800	300	1,500	.97	1,461.18	
1937	0	0	0		0	
1938	2,778	362	2,416	.62	1,503.80	129
1939	4,600	350	4,250	.60	2,550.00	
	22,943	3,109	19,834		$11,592.54	1,953

Average yield 1930-1939 — 9 bushels per acre. Average price 1930-1939 — 58¢ per bushel.

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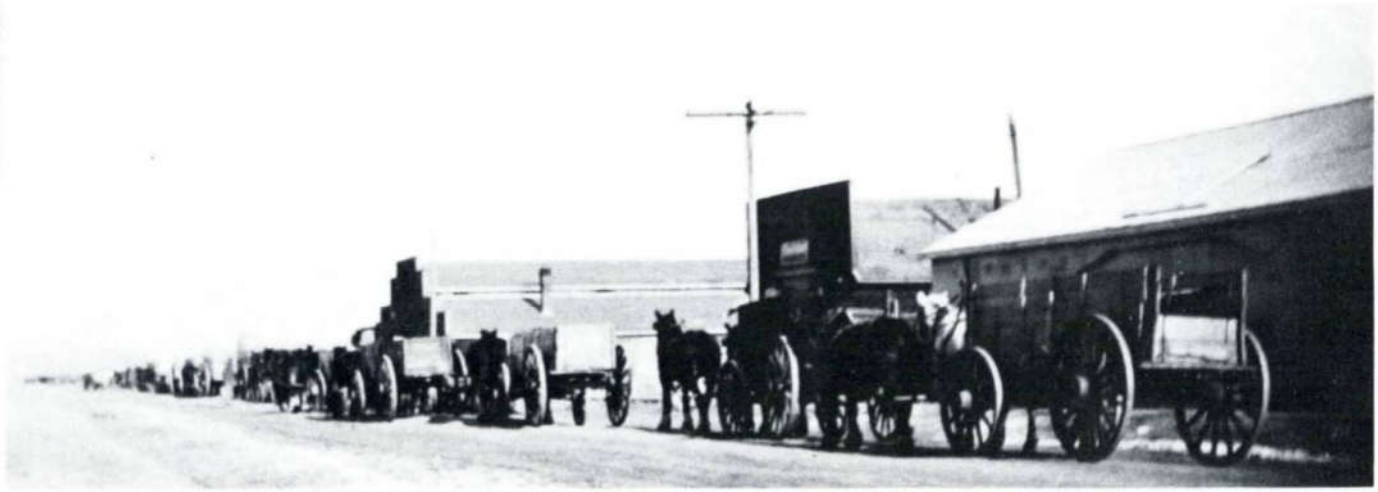


Farmers line up for seed grain in Neidpath, Saskatchewan, April 1932.

In the fall of 1935, Anthony and Rosie decided that their two older daughters should go into Swift Current and take grade twelve. Maybe the added education would help in the quest for a job. Dan and Lila [Tyson] decided to send their daughter, Rosamond, to the Swift Current Collegiate also, so the three girls were established in a housekeeping room in the Reid Block on Central Avenue in Swift Current. The room contained the bare essentials: two beds, a table and chairs, a dresser, a three-burner kerosene stove and a small kitchen cupboard. All food came from the farms of Dan and Anthony. The fathers endured many hardships in making trips back and forth during that severe winter, not the least of which was taking the girls back to Swift Current after Christmas holidays when the roads were partially blocked and had to be shovelled for long stretches to get the car through. When they reached Swift Current, Anthony had to turn around and make the thirty-mile trip home alone. Fortunately the places they had shovelled had not drifted in before he made the return trip.

There was a spell that winter when the mercury dropped to -52° F. and remained there for nearly a week. When it finally came up to -10°, the air felt like spring.

Anthony was busy that winter making a wind generator and wiring the house. Before spring work started he had lights in several rooms and in the cellar, and he also had the radio hooked to it. Neighbours came to see how it worked. The light was not as bright as a gasoline lamp, but the convenience of switching off and on was in its favour. Rosie kept busy hooking rugs and making quilts. No fabrics were ever thrown away in her household; they were dyed and converted into service of another kind.

It must have been with mixed feelings that in 1937

Collection of Edna Parson

Anthony Tyson drives his horses from atop a moving granary.

Dust-storm near Cadillac, Saskatchewan, April 1937.

Saskatchewan Archives

Saskatchewan Archives

Bennett buggy on a drifted-in road, the 1930s.

Anthony Tyson herded some of his horses into the barn and contacted the horse dealers about trading them in for a tractor. His horses had served him long and well. He had bred the percherons that came with him from Manitoba, and he had a reputation for keeping fine horses. But he was getting older, horses required a lot of handling and hired men were hard to find. As he looked to the future, he knew he would have to break with the past and modernize his farm operations. On 14 April 1937, he made a financial arrangement for the purchase of a 40-horsepower John Deere tractor for $1,602. Several of his faithful horses were part of the deal. Within three days he was on his land, cultivating and seeding with his new tractor. But any pride he may have felt in his new possession was wiped out when the worst dust-storms ever seen in the West swept over his field as they started to show softly green in early May. And so Anthony and his new tractor faced 1937, the year of superlatives — the coldest, the hottest, the driest, the dirtiest.

It did not rain much in 1937, at least not enough to give back even seed for the grain that had been sown in the ground. That is the only year that Anthony Tyson's records show a row of zeros across the page. However, it did rain once and the family got caught

in it. On 14 July 1937, they started out in the 1926 Chevrolet to go to the Experimental Farm picnic, where the farmers were invited to tour the grounds, talk to the experts, meet friends and gather for a picnic. The day looked a bit threatening; no one thought it really would rain. But that day it did. They were half-way to Swift Current when the thunder and lightning started crashing all around the car; the rain came down in a deluge and they pulled to the side of the road. The water came trickling through the eleven-year-old car roof. They sat there for several hours, enjoyed the picnic they had brought, and finally, when Anthony thought he could manipulate the car without skidding into the ditch, they slithered home. Within a few miles of home, the road turned dry. Their parched fields had not received one drop of rain. However, the storm attracted rains that were more general and the fields received some moisture, but it was too late to save the crop.

The year 1938 dawned — another 'next year'. With hope eternal the farmers faced it. They had to apply for relief seed after the total failure of the previous year. They planted and watched the skies. The omens were not good. With dogged determination and every artifice he could conceive, Anthony had striven to beat soil drifting. But on 9 May 1938, he saw his precious soil lift and join the dark riot that raged over the countryside. On the darkest day of his farming career he sat down and penned this document:

> In 1917 I had one field I had cultivated and didn't manage to get it plowed. I kept the weeds down with the cultivator, the rest of my summerfallow was well plowed and worked down. The following year, 1918, was another dry year. The plowing failed, but that field of cultivation had a fair crop on it. That set me thinking, and from 1917 until 1931 I was doing about half plowing, half cultivation. In dry years the cultivation would win out; in wet years they were about the same. In 1931 I had a 50-acre field of plowing in wheat that looked splendid until the dry weather hit it about the end of June, and then it scorched up and I got nothing off it at all. My cultivated fields threw me a light crop. Since then I have done very little plowing and now I don't do any at all. The field I cultivated first in 1917 has not been plowed since, but has only had one failure and that was in 1937, but was summerfallowed at regular intervals same as the other fields.
>
> The system I used until 1937 was to cultivate the summerfallow with a two-inch shovel on a stiff-tooth cultivator, as deep as the horses could reasonably take it. Sometimes I would lift two shovels so that they could take it easier. I would do that as early in the spring as possible. After that I would go directly crossways on it with a shovel slightly wider, but with a good point. The idea is to pocket the subsoil that it will hold moisture, and get a lumpy surface. After that I used to keep the weeds down with a wide shovel, 11- or 12-inch, but since the rod weeders came out I have used it to keep the weeds down, but use it sparingly, but I have to be in time or the weeds will beat me. With this system the early Frenchweed will go to seed, but I notice there is less Frenchweed, Pigweed or any weed than where it is plowed often.
>
> Up until 1937 I used horses, six on a 9-foot cultivator with wide shovels set almost flat just deep enough to make a good seed bed, with the 20-run drill coming not more than one hour behind so that there is not much chance of weeds coming before the wheat. The cultivator in the spring must cut the weeds clean and sowing must be done when the weather will kill them if possible. With the drill be sure to get the seed into moisture. I don't sow too thick as if it is a dry year it is better on the thin side, if it is wet it will stool a lot. That is for early sowing, if sown later it would have to be sown thicker or there might be a danger of rust or frost.
>
> In cleaning the wheat I take lots out underneath the Fanning Mill, only sow the biggest kernels. With the oats, I sometimes run them over the wheat gang of an Emerson Mill, that takes most of the wheat, all poor oats and all the weed seeds we have here, out of them.
>
> Up to 1937 I had very little drifting, but that year I bought a rubber-tired tractor. It is a splendid machine, moves far faster than horses, but my fields are drifting worse. I have to try to study why, and try to stop them. I figure I will have to change the angle of the shovels as the tractor going faster throws the soil far further and churns it more.
>
> Today, the 9th of May, is an awful day. I think all summerfallow in the country is drifting. My wheat was coming up strong and healthy. I wonder how it will survive.

In spite of all the demons that nature tossed at the farmers in 1938 — grasshoppers, rust, hail, wireworms and sawflies — the rainfall doubled that of the previous year and there was a crop. Anthony Tyson harvested 2,778 bushels and sold all but his seed for the following year at an average price of 60 cents per bushel.

At Neidpath the dry years came to an official end on 30 June 1938, with a tornado and a cloudburst. Water ran a foot deep down Central Avenue and Railway Street and washed away drowned chickens in the flood. That particular downpour only extended a few miles, but it was symbolic. It proved that there was still rain in the clouds that floated over Neidpath.◆

HIGH ARCTIC WATCH

Michael Stephenson

During his years with the Canadian Armed Forces, Michael Stephenson of Winnipeg served at Alert. His article is based on a personal knowledge of life at the High Arctic base.

Water-colours were done by Albert Hochbaum in 1978. They are published by permission of the Canadian War Museum, National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada.

IN THE OPERATIONS BUILDING the duty operator receives the first warning of an approaching blizzard. The information is routinely circulated as a cautionary.

'Just another blow' says the duty operator.

An hour later it is confirmed; heavy snows carried by winds up to 70 kilometres an hour are moving in fast from Greenland over the Lincoln Sea. Combined with the steady -37 degrees C. temperature, the winds will whip up a deadly chill factor. Yet the 'blow' causes no more concern than a rainy day in Winnipeg.

This is Canadian Forces Station Alert, the most northern, permanently inhabited community on earth. The nearest Inuit, far to the south, know it as 'The Land Of The Land Beyond People'.

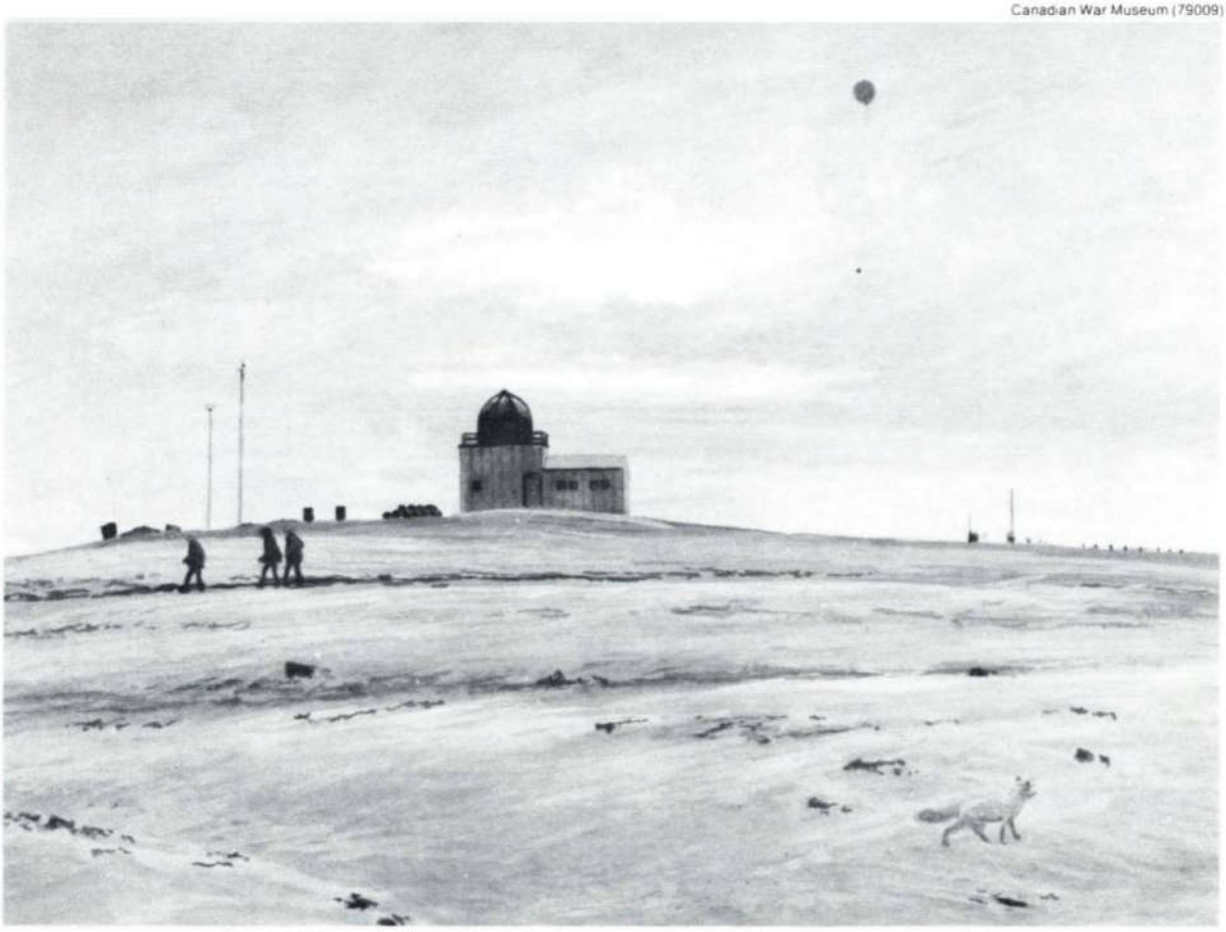
Manned continuously by some 200 Canadian Forces personnel, Alert is exceptional in many ways. Located on the northern tip of Ellesmere Island in the Northwest Territories, it huddles near the ice pack of the Arctic Ocean, fewer than 800 kilometres from the North Pole. Although Edmonton, Alberta, is the nearest major city — 3,500 kilometres by air — geographically Alert is situated east of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Locked in solidly by the permanent, timeless polar ice and the obvious absence of roads leading south, Alert must be serviced exclusively by air. Once a week a C-130 Hercules aircraft leaves Trenton, Ontario, on a ponderous eight-hour flight. The passengers — replacements for personnel who have completed their tour of duty — sit in canvas sling seats, generally with tons of vital, life-support cargo piled high and jammed against their knees the length of the plane. For these passengers there is no return flight for six months.

At one o'clock on a January afternoon the arctic sun has not surfaced, and will not for another two months. Seen from the air as the plane circles and then sluggishly begins to drop, Alert is a tight group of orange-red buildings clustered alone on a wind-swept, unending plain of snow that stretches into darkness beyond the electric lights.

One structure, because of its sheer size, stands out from the others. This is the recently completed multi-million dollar operations building. Here lies the heart and pulsebeat of Station Alert, its operations including sophisticated communications research and high frequency directional finding for search and rescue. Only those personnel possessing a high

Canadian War Museum (79009)



'Evening Weather Balloon'. Expendable instruments and a radio transmitter are sent aloft morning and evening to record high altitude weather.

security clearance designation are permitted access to the building. The remainder of Alert's personnel provide support to the station: carpenters, electricians, mess hall staff, medical and recreational specialists, supply technicians, vehicle operators and mechanics — all the talent and expertise necessary to keep the station functioning like a well-oiled watch.

Co-located with Alert is the High Arctic Weather Station (HAWS), undertaking studies and observation of the extreme weather conditions and atmospheric disturbances peculiar to the arctic environment. Data collected by HAWS shows that Alert's annual average temperature is -18 degrees C., February being the coldest month with daily temperatures averaging a crackling -33° C.

To combat the deadly cold, heating of the buildings in this High Arctic station is critical and not taken lightly. Twice a year a mammoth airlift is launched to refill the storage tanks with nearly half a million gallons of arctic diesel and aviation fuel.

Dubbed 'Operation Boxtop', the airlift is named after the old boxcar aircraft which transported the fuel in the early 1950s to the 'top of the world'. The operation requires up to 160 personnel working around the clock for ten days in sub-zero temperatures and total darkness. During the most recent 'Boxtop' in November 1981, three Hercules aircraft flew 80 return trips between Alert and the fuel storage facilities at Thule, Greenland — a total of more than 110,000 kilometres.

Now with the fuel tanks filled once again, the planes have long since returned south, leaving Alert and its inhabitants to dark, snow-bound isolation.

The storm out on the icy Lincoln Sea has veered now, and is making a run at Alert. The commanding officer is advised immediately. He makes several phone calls, setting in motion a rehearsed flash-flow of action known as 'Button Up', designed to secure the vulnerable station. Stored equipment is shuffled about to make indoor room for vehicles; furnace fuel tanks in buildings are checked and topped up; a tracked vehicle is dispatched to collect personnel working at the water pumphouse, two kilometres away.

Mounted outside each building is a coil of premeasured rope, and within thirty minutes of the commanding officer's call, a six-man team — 'the Hangmen' — have the ropes strung from door to

door. Without the ropes it is too easy for someone to walk between buildings in the snow-driven darkness and wander off to a frozen death on the arctic plains.

The storm hits as predicted. In less than an hour visibility is zero and Alert has faded under the whipping snow. A volunteer operating Alert's small 40-watt FM radio station gives a brief weather report, then plays some Hawaiian music. Outside, personnel creep along the ropes from building to building like heavily bundled bears. Shift workers are relieved without interruption. Nothing stops.

By morning the storm has moved on. Left behind in the grey silence are the drifts that the wind has packed like concrete in great swirled mounds over the buildings and down the streets. These are shaved away with bulldozers, layer by crusted layer, and preparations are made for the next storm.

Alert has bred a distinctive six-month life-style, aimed directly at mental survival. In a gradual, almost imperceptible process, the men absorb new concepts, take on new values, a major part of which is the exclusion of the rest of the world. They refer to it as the 'outside', and view it with an agonizingly confused mixture of disdain and longing. By their very isolation they are, in fact, effectively shielded from the usual worries and calamities of the outside.

Newspapers are outdated when the Hercules lands each week, as are their letters from families. On closed-circuit television they watch in boredom a video-taped World Series or Stanley Cup that has already been played and won. Only the commercials are of great importance; somehow they represent the real, commercial, household, grocery-shopping, bill-paying world that is so much missed.

Once a week the men can talk to their loved ones via ham radio — if there is a ham operator near their home, if he is willing to be on the air on a specific day and at a specific time for the next six months, if arctic weather and atmospheric conditions don't scramble the signals, and if the Alert equipment is operable at the time.

Each small detail of separation accumulates, and before long the men find that their minds are free of all responsibilities and concerns except those directly related to the station itself. But it is a grisly kind of freedom that never lets go.

The language, too, is their own, and does not survive outside Alert. A 'sizz' is a sleep and a 'pit' is what you sleep in. When you decide to go 'on a run' you'll be drunk for several days, and when you're hungry you go to the dining hall for 'growlies'. The 'Herkie Bird' is the plane that brings mail and movies for the week and 'My Herkie Bird' is that one special plane that will come for no other reason than to take you home at the end of six months. A 'short-timer' is anyone who comes to Alert for less than six months. Short-timers are held in disdain. They are ignored, avoided, excluded and, with any luck at all, sneered at — which is at least a recognition of sorts.

'It's like when you sell your house', says a lanky young corporal. 'You have to put up with all those people going through, over the carpets, in the rooms, touching this, remarking stupidly about that, all the time knowing nothing about what the place is to you. And you feel like an oddity on display yourself. Well, that's what short-timers are. They're not helped or hindered; they're simply invisible when they walk through my house.'

Whiskers, another corporal, is more positive. 'Damn it, it was the short-timers sent us here and now they just better stay out of our lives!'

Whiskers has been growing a beard for three months without much success. In time, almost everyone and everything acquires an appropriate nickname which is selected with great care and thought. Smokey is the station firefighter, as will be his successor in two months. The Leprechaun, with a shaved strip of beard around his chin, looks like an impish leprechaun. Balloon is the chubby bartender. Sheepdog works in the Operations Building and refuses haircuts, while the Mohican carefully maintains a dark patch of hair down the centre of his shaved head.

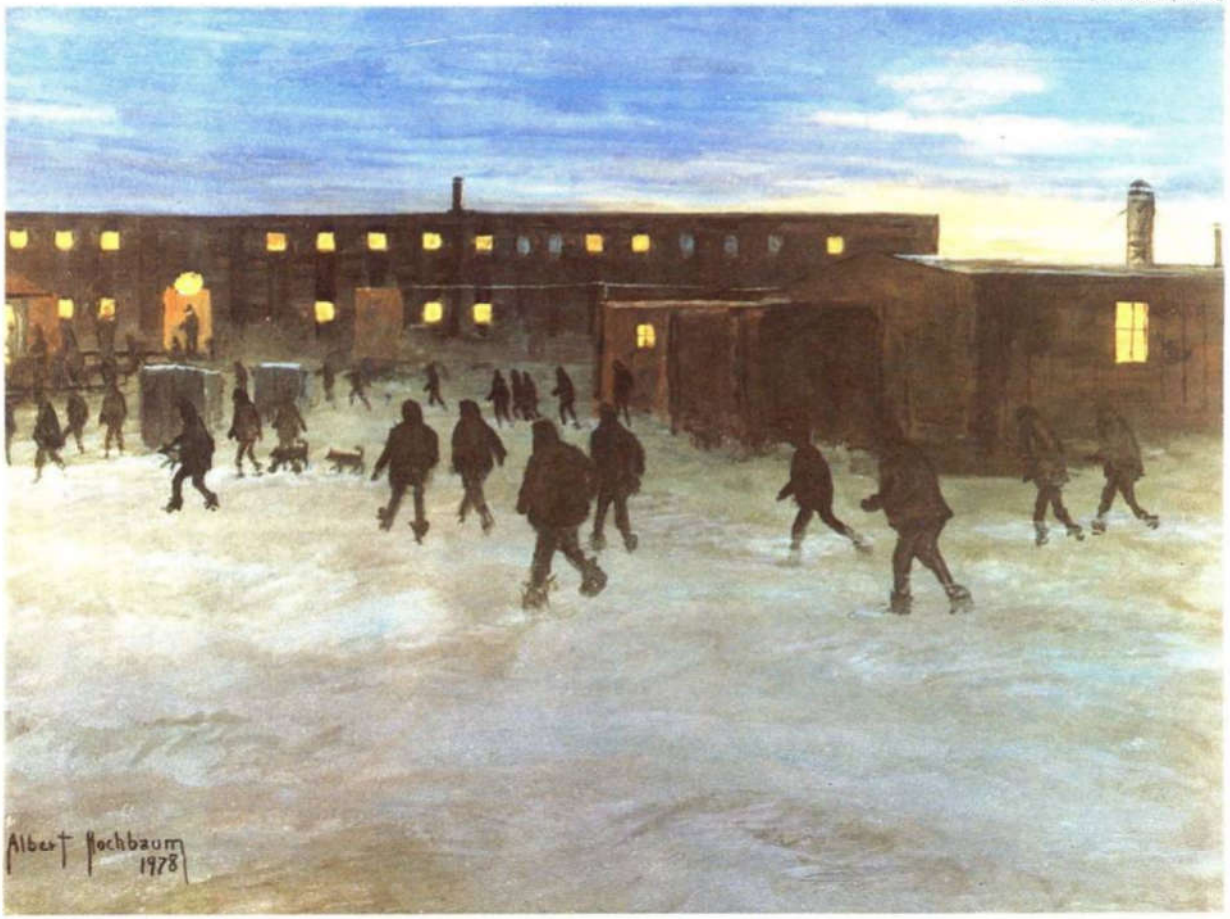
No one escapes the wrath and the humour. The commanding officer, a major with an enviously full beard, is Castro, and the strict chief warrant officer, responsible for station discipline, is Valentine. The officers' bar is known as the bridal suite, the senior non-commissioned officers' is the Old Folks' Home and the junior non-commissioned officers' is Club 180 — named for the number of days in a tour of duty.

Club 180 is the gathering place. Although officially out of bounds to all other ranks, during the dark months the regulation is not rigid and anyone interested in a party ultimately ends up there sometime during the weekend.

Now, on Friday night, the cloakroom of Club 180 is jammed with parkas and thick outer storm-pants and mukluks. Inside, the dress is basically shirts and jeans — casual and relaxed.

The club is crowded and noisy. Behind the bar, Balloon hurries to keep up with a steady flow of orders. He is naked from the waist up, the Arctic's only topless waitress. The noise level increases steadily through the evening. The smoke thickens. Balloon, falling behind at the bar, has enlisted a private, fully clothed in rumpled khaki fatigues, to help him. Slow Eddie weaves his way among the tables doing his John Wayne impression and, as the night wears on, switches to a more listless Cary Grant. Someone begins to play the piano. Near by, Bunny clears a space on the floor and, amidst cheers, once again performs his famous and skateless double salchow with a half twist to the music of the piano.

Canadian War Museum (79012)



'Eve of the Long Winter'. After dinner, staff return to their duties or a night's rest in their comfortable living quarters, 5 September 1978. On this evening the sun set for the first time in five months.

In the never-ending darkness one day slides unnoticed into another. Those who must work in the morning drift away and are replaced afresh by others coming off shift. It is difficult knowing when to call it quits with no sunrise as an indicator, and Saturday is an almost uninterrupted copy of this night.

On Sunday the station is quiet. It is a day of recovery: of sleep and laundry and reading.

Late Sunday night Slow Eddie and the Leprechaun have a final snack in the dining hall and return to their quarters. Passing down the hushed hallway they are halted by a low, muffled sobbing behind a locked door. They know the sound.

'Bunny' says Slow Eddie, his voice a bare whisper. Bunny has two small pre-school children, and two months to go. Listening, the Leprechaun nods. They go into their own rooms and lock the doors. From that moment, Bunny will be watched over by his friends.

They awake Monday morning to the dark snow-world, another week left behind and another week ahead.

The unbroken, locked-in tour of duty is a boiler with too few relief valves, and seems to keep them balanced always on the brink of something strange and tremulous, something that has no single name and can never be fully suppressed. It is evident in group conversations, when one of them turns imperceptibly away and his eyes film over and, for a short time, he's not there any more.

Most of them learn to somehow absorb the adrenalin, do their time with a minimum of internal damage, and depart. A few, for reasons mental, physical or personal, are evacuated before their time. And yet, take away one of these men and walk all around him, and you'll find he's dedicated every time. The job has to be done, and he does it.

* * * *

Since this article was written, the Minister of National Defence has permitted a limited number of female Canadian Forces personnel to serve tours of duty at Alert.

At this time the full ramifications of that major policy change are not documented. It should be noted, however, that in the Middle East, female personnel have served tours of duty with the Canadian contingent of the United Nations peace-keeping force since 1975. ◆

The Ancient Dwellings of ARCTIC QUEBEC

By Jean Lengellé
with assistance of Ian Badgley

An 'Inukshuk' on Diana Island, where ancient dwellings of the Dorset people are being examined under the auspices of the University of Quebec, Montreal.

'WELCOME TO FORT CHIMO. Please remain seated for a few minutes. Winds are too strong to permit lowering the deplaning equipment. . . .'

Through the windows of our now stationary aircraft we see a dust-storm surrounding the airport buildings. It does not augur well for the rest of our trip. If the big 727 is having difficulties, the helicopter will be grounded, and we will be delayed on our flight to Diana Island, our destination, some 250 miles to the north in the north-eastern part of Ungava Bay. It is a mid-July day, 1980; the temperature is a chill 4° C.

Why remote Diana Island? We are visiting a team of archaeologists who are trying to learn more about the mysterious Dorset culture, primarily from evidence left behind in the form of 'houses' that were built, the scientists say, between 200 B.C. and 1500 A.D. The archaeologists are attempting to piece together a picture of the life of these prehistoric people through a detailed examination of the remains of their dwellings, the various tools and utensils found at the sites, and the famous and dramatic rock cairns, some of which look like human figures.

The project, called 'Tuvaaluk' by the researchers, is under the auspices of the University of Quebec at

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Dr Jean Lengellé is a geomorphologist and Director of the Negotiated Grants Division of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. He is a frequent contributor to lay and scientific journals.

Ian Badgley, assistant director of the 'Tuvaaluk' project, is a graduate of the University of Toronto.

Photographs are by Jean Lengellé.

Montreal, and is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, a federal funding agency in Ottawa. I work for the Council, and with me are the Council's president, André Fortier, and Denis St-Onge of the University of Ottawa.

We have come north to spend a few days with the archaeologists in their final year of field activities. The project team includes the director, Dr Patrick Plumet, who teaches archaeology at the university, assistant director Ian Badgley, and some 20 project assistants. Their main camp is on Diana Island.

Nobody lives on Diana Island now. Today, it is primarily a refuge for wildlife and a hunting ground for the Inuit from the nearby village of Koartac. In prehistoric times the island provided shelter and food for the Dorset people — a race who had the courage and the energy to come to terms with this hostile environment.

Who were these hardy people?

It is only from analysis of the evidence left behind that scientists can even begin to speculate and to formulate their hypotheses. But very often this evidence is uncovered through sheer luck! A good example of this is what happened to us en route to Diana Island, looking for cairns around Baie aux Feuilles. These stone-built pillars are referred to by the Inuit as 'Inukshuk' or 'Stone Men'. At one point in our flight, a strange configuration of stones caught Dr Plumet's alert eye and he ordered the pilot to circle the site and land. Something was clearly worth investigating. For us uninitiated observers, there was not much to stay around for: stones, of course, blackened by weather and brightened here and there with a few spots of orange lichens. There were fuchsia tints of some tiny red flowers and the brilliant yellow dot of a dandelion, a truly beautiful flower up here, nestled between huge rocks with barely any soil on which to survive. But the real find — evidence of people having inhabited the area — was right in front of our eyes. It was nothing very spectacular, mind you.

Dorset houses usually consist of shallow depressions surrounded by low gravel or stone-block wall foundations. In this instance, a series of blocks delineated just such an area. The roof of the house in prehistoric times would have been covered either by hides or, perhaps, blocks of snow and ice, like the Inuit igloo. A few steps below this house was yet another structure, characterized by a long depression, on either side of which, said Plumet, were the sleeping and living quarters of the inhabitants. These quarters were separated by the 'cooking' area which, were we to dig, would most probably reveal evidence of charcoal or burned animal fat. And were we to dig still further, we might, with luck, almost surely find some utensils such as harpoon heads or stone scrapers and knives made of quartzite or milky quartz. Some tools are not of local origin, which

Members of the archaeological team at Diana Island. In mid-July, the temperature is 4° C., with winds gusting off Ungava Bay.

Pamiok Island. Inuit children, camping near by with their parents, listen to the theories about the past history of their land and people.

Ivik Island and the remains of one of the Dorset houses.

A stone structure on Diana Island: a house, a cache, or a funerary monument?

One of the many cairns on Diana Island.

suggests the Dorset people traded with other areas. A few yards further, we find stones arranged in a fashion similar to the tepee rings so numerous in the west, and fulfilling the same purpose.

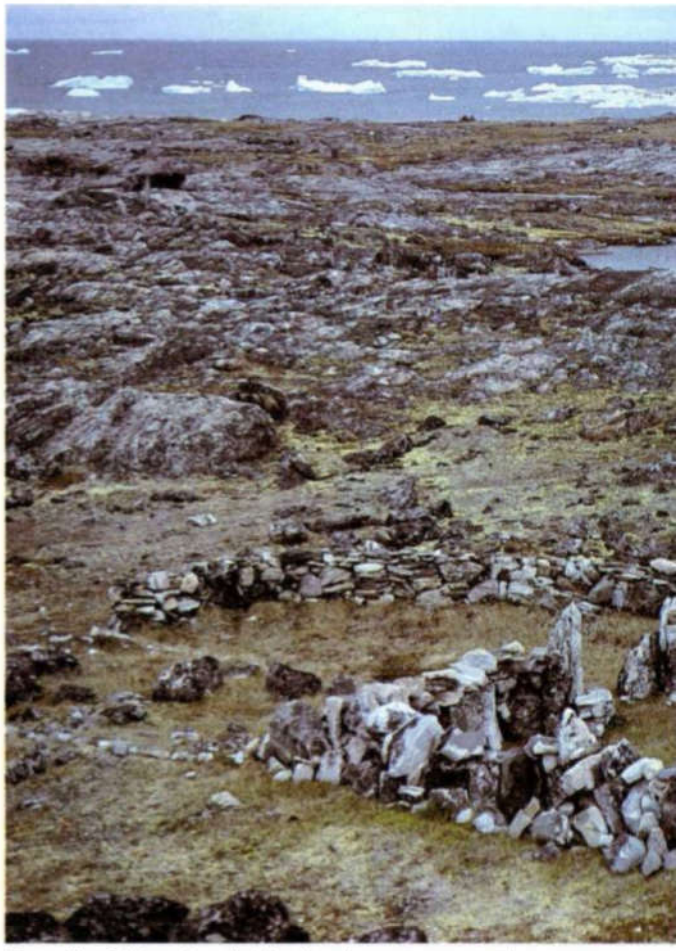
But then what? Since the Dorset people left no written history, scientists have no idea when they settled — or camped — here. It is only by comparing this site with others that archaeologists may be able to find clues to establish a theory about the date and duration of habitation and the number of people who once made up the settlements. Different people at different times might have inhabited the island and built one shelter on top of another. Sorting it all out, therefore, proves to be an enormously difficult task on any given site. It is only by careful carbon dating of the implements and by comparative observations that clues will eventually bring to light something of the day-to-day life of these early people.

But the evidence we have of who they were and where they came from can give rise to greatly conflicting theories — and to sharp controversy as well. Archaeologist Thomas Lee of the Tuvaaluk project, for example, speculates that the longhouse he has reconstructed on Pamiok Island was made by Norse Vikings. These people, he believes, were not only strong enough to move the huge stones which made the walls of the house, but also lived a different, more 'hygienic' life — in European terms — than that of the prehistoric Inuit. The house itself looks large enough to have sheltered dozens of people. But only the stones remain to provide meagre hints of what it might have looked like.

Other archaeologists, who feel that the Vikings may never have set foot in this part of Ungava, discredit Lee's hypothesis. They believe that the people who built these dwellings were Dorset, a prehistoric Canadian Inuit population whose ancestors came across the Bering Strait from Asia. Evidence of this is demonstrated by a number of similar houses scattered around the Arctic. This is the generally accepted theory at present. However, it is just as easy to speculate that, instead of coming across the Bering Strait, the people who built the Dorset houses might have come from Greenland. Davis Strait, after all, is not much more than one and one-half times the width of the Hudson Strait. Also, as is well known, the Vikings were splendid seamen and crossed the North Atlantic Ocean innumerable times for commerce, exploration and colonization. People arguing in favour of one or the other of these theories can become quite heated, since each group is convinced of the validity of its views.

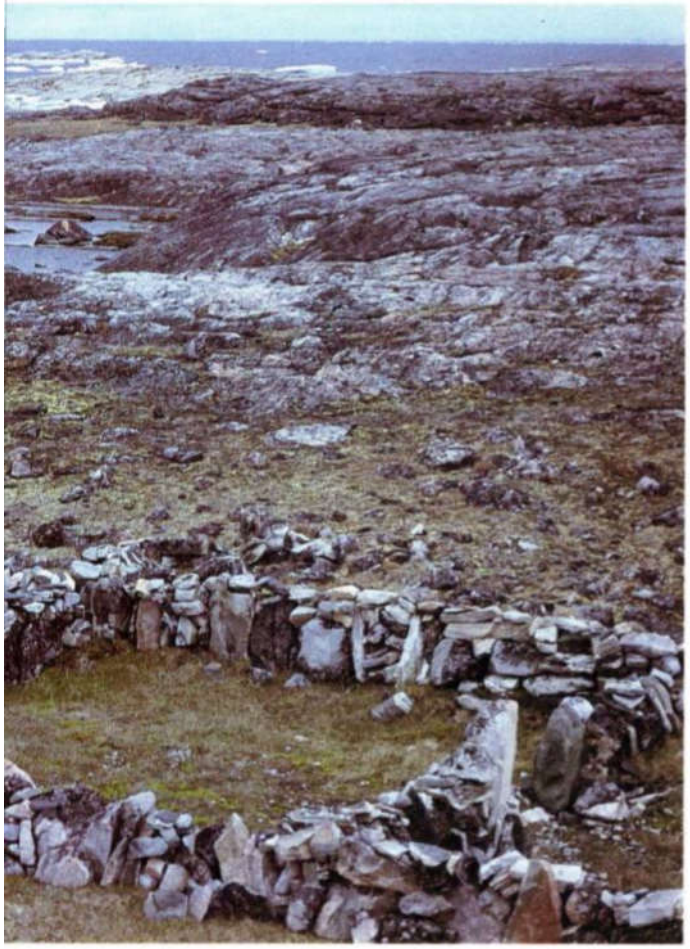
When asked his opinion, Professor Plumet prefers to say that until analysis of all of the artifacts recovered by him and his team has been completed it makes little sense to speculate further. The theories can range, of course, from the fantastic to the

Dorset objects from Diana Island. Lower right, a scraper of quartzite, and left and above, quartzite points.



The walls of this ancient dwelling have been reconstructed by archaeologist Thomas Lee of the Tuvaaluk project. Lee believes that the house was built by Norse Vikings.

Ivik Island. Birds desert their nests, frightened by the noise of landing helicopters.



mundane. In considering the cairns, for example, what prevents us from thinking, as Erich Von Daniken might, that they could have been erected by beings from outer space? Or that, when there are three or four together, they could have been the result of a competition? What prevents us from believing — which is generally accepted theory — that these 'Stone Men' served to divert the caribou to the hiding places of waiting hunters? That hypothesis does not seem to make sense either, when we look at the sites of most of the cairns — at the top of steep hills. Would there be caribou up there? So we recklessly proceed to make other hypotheses. Were the cairns beacons to provide directions? Were they works of art, perhaps inspired by the natural structure of the rocks? Did they have a religious function?

While all this archaeological work and hypothesizing is going on, the local Inuit people are watching. And even though they may not be completely part of the discussions which may take place among the visitors following a particularly good dig or an unusual find, they, of course, know the matter concerns their forebears, and they are often disturbed to see that southern white men are invading their territory and coming to all kinds of conclusions about who they are and where they came from. Sometimes they see the archaeologist as an intruder desecrating their burial grounds as he digs into a promising spot in the soil. He may even disturb the wildlife. Ducks, for example, often abandon their nesting grounds, frightened by the noise of landing helicopters.

On the last leg of the journey, before leaving the camp at Diana, we are told that an Indian man who lives in Koartac and who had left the village some time earlier by canoe to collect eiderdown in Ungava Bay, is long overdue from his expedition. The man, accompanied by his two small children and a teen-aged companion, was expected to have returned three days before, and in the interim the weather had turned foul.

The police promptly charter our helicopter and send our pilot in search of the missing group. So we make our way back to Fort Chimo from Koartac aboard an Air Inuit Twin Otter and leave the chopper to its rescue mission. Before we leave Fort Chimo we learn that the man and his companions have been found, tired and weak but alive. In Dorset times, there would have been no rescue mission. But, we speculate, the eiderdown hunt in those days might have been differently planned, by a people who had long since learned, alone against those bitter elements, what to expect under such severe conditions.

Perhaps, through Dr Plumet's study, we shall one day have more to go on than our speculations and our wild surmises, and a true picture of Canada's Dorset people will begin to take form. ◆

Dr Charles Frederick Newcombe

The alienist who became collector of the native art treasures of the Pacific Northwest

By Jean Low

Photographs reproduced with permission of the Ethnology Division, British Columbia Provincial Museum in Victoria

Dr and Mrs C. F. Newcombe with their children: Marian and Helen. Undated but possibly 1882, at Lake Windermere, Cumbria County, England, prior to the family's move to Hood River, Oregon.

IN 1901 GEORGE DORSEY, curator of Chicago's Field Columbian Museum, wrote to Dr Charles Frederick Newcombe of Victoria, British Columbia:

> I hope to devote an entire hall to the Haidas and believe it is possible for us to do it better than any other institution.

His letter reflects not only the ambitions of its author, but the rivalry among museums at the turn of the century over Northwest Coast artifacts. The main contenders were the Field, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Smithsonian. In order to further his ambitions Dorsey had hired Newcombe, a Victoria physician, to collect for the Field at a salary of $100 a month. Dorsey wanted everything to illustrate Haida life, from the tallest of totems to the tiniest of utensils.

Newcombe had been approached earlier by Franz Boas of the American Museum of Natural History and George Dawson of the Geological Survey of Canada, but neither could make the offer of a fixed salary. Unfortunately, British Columbia allowed its own magnificent treasure to be drained away; most people were unaware or uninterested. Newcombe was one of a handful of people who understood the situation, but, desperately in need of money, he accepted the job with the Chicago Museum, expressing his sentiments in his letter of acceptance.

> I can assure you that apart from the monetary consideration it will be a labour of love for me to try to carry out the programme you have so boldly sketched out. To make an adequate provision for these large objects is a noble scheme. As a patriotic Britisher I must own that I often sigh when I think how lightly these things are regarded by my own countrymen. None of them are in the field, however, and rather than aid in a policy of

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During her early life at Juneau, Alaska, Jean Low developed a deep interest in the art and culture of the Pacific Northwest. A graduate of Stanford University, California, she now lives and writes in Atherton, California.

dispersal amongst numerous imperfect collections, I would far rather do what I can to help to make a really representative one, as is evidently your idea and that of your most generous supporters.

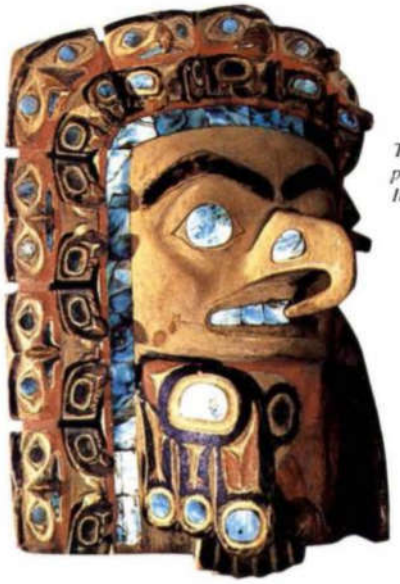
Charles Frederick Newcombe was born in Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1851, the eighth of the fourteen children born to Eliza and William Lister Newcombe of Yorkshire. Both parents were firmly rooted in middle-class England. They believed in hard work, frugality, love of God and of country. One of William Lister's pleasures was in educating his sons, and education was exciting to Charles Frederick, a curious and intelligent child.

In 1874 Newcombe graduated with distinction from the University of Aberdeen, obtaining the degree of MBCM which entitled him to practise medicine. The last three months of his undergraduate years were spent as a clinical clerk engaged in research at the West Riding Pauper Insane Asylum in Wakefield, Yorkshire. There he came under the influence of Dr James Crichton-Browne, one of the most charismatic alienists of the day ('alienist' was the name given to those who treated the insane), who preached and practised the new methods for treating insanity which were just beginning to gain a foothold in England. These methods had been introduced several years earlier by William Tuke, a Quaker tea-merchant who founded 'The Retreat', his own asylum, where listening to the patients was encouraged, as was the therapy of exercise and work. Restraints and beatings were abolished.

Crichton-Browne's term of office at the West Riding Asylum was called its 'Golden Age'. He was responsible for instigating research, for which he hired promising students, including Newcombe, whom he praised for his work. Stimulated by his experience at the Yorkshire asylum, Newcombe became the assistant medical officer of 'Rainhill', an asylum near Liverpool, under Dr Robert Lawson, also a disciple of Tuke. He stayed four years, obtained his M.D. and worked hard at practising the theories he had learned in Wakefield.

Before leaving Rainhill, Newcombe had become engaged to Marian Arnold, the daughter of Richard Arnold, a surgeon-major in the Madras army. Shy and withdrawn, she did not want to live in the shadow of an asylum, and soon the couple moved to Lake Windermere where Newcombe became the partner of Dr Alexander Hamilton in the general practice of medicine.

His diaries for this period indicate that his was a fulfilling life. His medical practice was varied; he learned to sail on lovely Lake Windermere; he participated in the town's social activities, often playing his violin at musicales. Except for an occasional walk to gather botanical specimens, Marian seldom accompanied him. Scarcely mentioned, except as ill or tired, she appears to be a shadowy figure. Newcombe's diaries are seldom expressive of feelings and the entry for 22 March 1880 is: 'Female infant, born 12:45 a.m.' This was Marian Newcombe, their first child, named for her mother, and followed ten months later by a sister, Helen.



Tsimshian frontlet, possibly hawk or owl. Inlaid with abalone shells.

While still at Windermere, Newcombe had taken a three-month trip to Canada and the United States, travelling through the cities of the eastern seaboard and across the continent to California. He was deeply impressed by what he saw and decided to return to investigate the Pacific Coast north of San Francisco. Accordingly, in September of 1883, he embarked from Liverpool. His headquarters were Victoria, where he had tentative plans to settle.

Uncertain, however, of steady employment in Victoria, he decided to visit the Columbia River town of Hood River in Oregon. The laconic Newcombe was enchanted. He had arrived on an incandescent fall day. The shimmering red and gold of the maple leaves punctuated the deep colour of the evergreens, and the Columbia flowed silently on its majestic way to the sea. The tiny town had a hotel, five stores, and a half-dozen houses. The settlers made it clear that a doctor would be welcome. It was just the place he was looking for.

His return to England was brief, and on 30 January 1884 he left from Liverpool with Marian and their three children. It was a queasy crossing for the children, and miserable for Marian, who was pregnant again. They arrived in Hood River a month later.

Getting settled was strenuous, and the energetic 32-year-old doctor assisted in the building of his house

Haida walking stick created by Charles Edenshaw of Masset.

and barn. His medical practice started immediately. He covered a large territory by sled, boat, horse and hand-car; and he treated everything from burns and dropsy and broken bones to the removal of popcorn from a child's ear. Sometimes he made his winter rounds with heels frozen to the stirrups. His fee for a house call was from $1.50 to $2.50.

In Hood River Newcombe cultivated an extensive garden and he had a small fruit ranch a few miles from town. Three years after his arrival he built another two-storey structure. His drugstore occupied the first floor while the upper floor was used for a lodge room and was the headquarters of the local whist club which Newcombe organized. He continued his collection of botanical specimens and began one of arrowheads. Marian's diaries, full of pressed wild-flowers, reflect happy times: family outings by boat or sleigh, her lovely flower garden, the harvest of strawberries.

Shortly after their arrival, on 29 April 1884, Newcombe's diary contains the entry: 'Boy at about 2 P.M.' This was his second son, William Arnold, who would be followed in two years by a third son, Arthur.

After five years in Hood River the family left, and once more Newcombe abandoned a successful medical practice for an uncertain future in the capital of British Columbia. Again, it seemed to be Marian's wish to move, this time to a more salubrious climate.

Victoria was both bastion of Empire and frontier outpost. Most of its inhabitants were English who ruled and behaved as they had at home. Chinese and Indians, counted separately in the census, formed the small part of the population. For a city of its size, Victoria had many English-trained physicians; another medical practice was not easy to establish and maintain. Fortunately Charles and Marian, though far from wealthy, had both inherited money from their parents.

Less than two years after their arrival, Marian became pregnant with her sixth child and a healthy boy was born in February of 1891. For Marian, however, all did not go well. Newcombe and his friend, the English-trained physician Edward Hasell, paced the floor for six days and nights, administering enemas and morphine, of little use in the battle against septicemia, but it was all they had. One week after the baby was born, Newcombe's diary contains the following entry:

> Marian died 5 a.m. Took children in 4 a.m. only seemed to recognize Nellie whom she smiled at. Nellie much overcome. The others not. Afterwards walked to Shoal Bay.

Newcombe, now thirty-nine years old, was a widower with six children. Whatever grief he might have felt was borne privately, and soon he left for England, taking the three oldest children, May, Nellie, and Charlie with him. Will, Arthur and the unnamed baby were left with a housekeeper.

Once in England, the rounds of visits with relatives over, he undertook a formal course in geology at the University of London, and informal studies of natural sciences at the British Museum.

After nearly a year he returned to Victoria alone, leaving the three children in England. During his absence the baby had succumbed to an epidemic of infant diarrhoea. Just before he died, Dr Hasell had him baptized Duncan Lister Arnold Newcombe, and he was buried beside his mother. The two boys left at home seemed overjoyed to see their father, and the family settled into a rented house beside the sea on Dallas Road.

As his medical practice waned, his interest in natural history increased, and he continued to collect large numbers of botanical and geological specimens. In 1890, when the Natural History Society of Victoria was founded, he was one of its first members. The family had an aquarium, they gathered shells, and they all participated in natural history lessons for which he set aside time every day.

In 1894 came a chance to resume the practice of alienism. His friend Dr Hasell was appointed to investigate conditions in the Provincial Insane Asylum at New Westminster, and quickly moved to associate Newcombe in the investigation. The two men spent many weeks interviewing patients, guards, and staff. Newcombe was appalled; there were restraints, beatings by the guards, violence, and a murder. Only in the segregated Chinese ward did they find semi-decent conditions. Their report stated the sordid facts and resulted, although they had not recommended it, in the removal of the superintendent. Newcombe was appointed in his place.

Before joining Hasell in the investigation, Newcombe had taken the precaution of consulting a government doctor and an independent lawyer whether or not his participation in the investigation would prejudice his chances of becoming superintendent, a job he wanted, was qualified for, and which paid $250 a month. He was assured that he could participate without fear of losing his chance at the superintendency and that his participation would not be unethical. He was appointed by the provincial secretary, James Baker, at the end of the year, and removed from office two weeks later. Baker had had second thoughts. There was too much criticism, especially from New Westminster, about Newcombe's impartiality — and he could not afford a political liability, no matter how competent. Newcombe, fair almost to a fault, was crushed. His first impulse was to go off again to England but he became ill and was in bed for five weeks. For him, it was the end of alienism and the sort of medical practice he loved.

Haida home at Haina on Maude Island near Skidegate. Photograph taken prior to 1907.

Tsimshian shaman's charm, carved from alder. Collected by Newcombe, 1913.

Fortunately, he had been moving slowly, almost unconsciously, towards a new career.

The Queen Charlotte Islands lie off the northern part of the coast of British Columbia and stretch from tiny Langara Island in the north, 156 miles south into the Pacific. The two largest islands, Graham and Moresby, are ringed by hundreds of smaller islands. Seldom does the sun shine on the lush green growth of the rain forest tangled beneath the tall spruce and taller cedars. With the exception of the east coast of Graham Island, the coastlines are indented with inlets navigable only by small boats, and treacherous in the frequent storms. The isolation of the islands provided a secure home to the Haida Indians for hundreds of years.

After the first contact with the white man, the Haidas had engaged in a brisk trade in sea-otter skins — so brisk, in fact, that the herd was soon depleted, but not before the Haidas had become acquainted with whisky, guns, and strange diseases. The population was already dwindling when, in 1862, a smallpox epidemic dealt a crippling blow. Village after village was deserted as the survivors fled to the two large settlements at Masset and Skidegate. Left behind were their homes, with carved house posts and tall totems, now but spectral reminders of a vanishing past. Left behind, too, were carvings and burial sites, containing much booty for scientists and museum collectors.

The Haidas had already begun to change as they tried to adapt to the white man. And in this endeavour, they were aided by the missionaries who were, in many cases, devout and courageous men, willing to devote their lives to their beliefs. To them, the paraphernalia of the shaman, of dancing, and of the potlach ceremony were trappings of the heathen, and should be destroyed. These missionaries were a great help to the collector who wanted to save the relics of a moribund civilization to display in the museums of the world. As a Haida chief explained years later:

> The other day they asked me to speak and I said that I had visitors from the Victoria Museum just the other day and the first thing they asked me was, "Where are all your totem poles?" So I told them that white people have taken everything away from us just the same as totem poles were taken away. The church came along and told us it was a sin to have those things . . . and they told the people to cut the poles down. And some of it, they took away. But, when the dancing gear — all this fancy dancing gear that they used to use for entertaining the people — when they gave it to the church people they grabbed it with both hands. Then they sold it to you people, where you come from, the museum, and they built churches with that money.

Tsimshian Frog screen of yellow cedar, operculum inlaid teeth and abalone inlaid eyes. Collected on the Nass River, 1913.

Tsimshian dance apron of caribou skin. Beaver design in porcupine quills, lower edge fringed with caribou hooves. From the Skeena River area.

Kwakiutl mask, representing the sun, Sisiutl and ancestor. Collected by Newcombe at Kalokwis, Turnour Island.

Newcombe first saw the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1895, and the man who had spent his boyhood years in the industrial towns of Newcastle, Nottingham, and London, was delighted with their beauty. For a naturalist, they were paradise.

Only two years went by before he visited the Islands a second time, and on this trip he had his own small boat built to specification in order to navigate the inlets and fiords. He also had commissions to collect, and he had a guide Henry Moody who was next in line to be Chief Skedans. He spoke English and had already been guide to the Smithsonian ethnologist, John Swanton. It was with Moody that Newcombe negotiated to buy his first totem pole, a house post belonging to Moody's family. It came from the deserted village of Tanu and he sent it to Kew Gardens.

His commissions came from George Dawson of the Canadian Geological Survey, and Franz Boas of the American Museum of Natural History. Dawson was able to give Newcombe $300 and to trust him with collecting native artifacts and natural history specimens. In his letter of 1 June 1897, Dawson shows his awareness of the fact that Canadian treasures were going to the United States when he alludes to Franz Boas:

> In so far as collecting goes, however, he is working entirely in the interests of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and consequently whatever he may get in that way is lost to us.

But Boas had also commissioned Newcombe, contributing $150 and requesting decorated parts of houses as well as skulls for his anthropometric measurements.

Skeletons, and particularly skulls, were thought to be significant in the solution of the scientific puzzle of the differences between the races. To get them it was necessary to rob graves. Dawson told Newcombe of a cave, warning him not to tell anyone else; Boas was also discreet. At one time Newcombe went to the ingenious length of employing Chief Ninstints for a guide, then employing another native to distract the Chief while he helped himself to the contents of the graves.

It was on this second trip to the Queen Charlottes that Newcombe met George Dorsey of the Field Columbian Museum. Dorsey, with his companion, James Deans of Victoria, was on a collecting trip of his own, and in his grave-robbing had been quite indiscreet, helping himself with impunity and scattering the contents, an activity which horrified the missionaries and aroused the wrath of the scientific — but more compassionate — Boas. Newcombe and Dorsey met on a rainy June evening in Skidegate. Their psychological make-ups were quite different — in some respects, almost opposite — but they had a large common ground in their scientific pursuits. Newcombe was quiet and retiring; Dorsey was bold and aggressive. Nonetheless, they seemed to get along well, and four years later Dorsey outbid Boas and Dawson to obtain Newcombe's services. He was able to offer something Newcombe always wanted — the security of a steady job with a salary in pursuit of scientific goals.

It was Dorsey's wish to have a magnificent Haida collection 'second to none', and Newcombe's task was to achieve this goal. He returned to the Queen Charlottes, his native guides, and the deserted villages repeatedly, to satisfy Dorsey's ambitions. On every trip he was keenly aware of botanical and geological specimens for which he had a sharp eye, and he collected them in addition to everything desired by the Field Museum. His own museum in Victoria benefited by these endeavours.

The contact between Newcombe and Dorsey, which was to last two years, lengthened into five. Newcombe spent many months in Chicago working in the museum, classifying and arranging the things he had sent.

When Dorsey was satisfied with his Haida collection he turned to other British Columbia tribes. Having seen some Kwakiutl artifacts obtained by Boas he sent Newcombe to try to duplicate them, and the latter worked extensively among this tribe as well as others on Vancouver Island and the mainland.

So far Newcombe had received no recognition from his own government in the form of a regular job. However, he did make donations to the museum in Victoria, and they commissioned him when they could. The Provincial Museum was, at that time, a small one devoted to natural history, particularly zoology, under the guidance of its curator, Francis Kermode. In 1904 Newcombe had applied for the job of curator but was turned down in favour of Kermode who had come up in the ranks as a taxidermist and assistant curator.

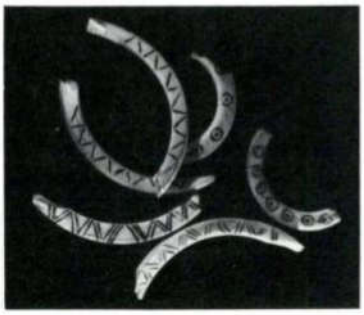
The employment by the Field came to an end in 1906 and Dorsey asked Newcombe to collect again for them, this time in Siberia. Newcombe turned this down, partly because of his age, but partly, too, because he had received recognition as an authority on the natural history and ethnology of British Columbia. His correspondence with scientists all over the world was voluminous, and apparently rewarding enough that he wished to stay in British Columbia rather than to entertain any more ideas of travel, which, in his younger days he might have welcomed.

In 1906 he was summoned to Ottawa to rearrange their Northwest Coast collection, and reported to a friend:

> You would be greatly disappointed in the Ottawa collection from the N.W. Coast. Not a thing is in

Kootenay baby carrier, upper section beaded.

Incised and decorated beaver teeth, used in a Coast Salish women's gambling game.



Henry Moody and Dr Newcombe. Photograph taken in 1923 at Tanu on the Queen Charlotte Islands, where Newcombe bought his first totem pole, a house post belonging to Moody's family.

its proper place. Since Dawson died no one has taken any interest in the collection. They had lost the keys to the cases and had to send for a carpenter to break them open so I could see anything. Still there are very many good things there.

Newcombe by now had become a professional collector. In this business he was aided by his son Willy, who had an aptitude for the natural sciences and an interest in the natives of British Columbia. Trained by his father from childhood, without benefit of formal education, he too, became an authority on British Columbia. When his father was in the field or in Chicago, Willy kept things humming at home, answering letters, keeping in touch with native suppliers, and crating totem poles for shipment. Father and son had an affectionate and trusting relationship, founded on mutual respect.

The three oldest children lived away from home for many years. When they returned Newcombe built his own house on Dallas Road into which the family moved — from rented quarters on Niagara Street — in 1907. Earlier, Newcombe took Willy and Arthur, one at a time, on field trips. At other times the three went together, and a typical excursion was one to Tacoma on Christmas Day to see a shell collection.

Although Newcombe wished to work on a salaried basis, he was, in effect, forced to have his own business. He was turned down for quarantine officer in 1890, for superintendent of the asylum in 1897, and for curator of the museum in 1904. Although well qualified for all these jobs he was as unaware of politics as he was astute in natural history.

He went about his business mainly with the aid of the Indian chiefs, or the most powerful men of each tribe. The days of barter were over and he bought and commissioned things from the Indians, always paying the lowest possible price. Once a native had given him a price, Newcombe would never pay a penny more. He constantly bemoaned the fact that prices were too high and he lost many a treasure to shrewder collectors who would pay the price. On many occasions he bought a few things, or an entire collection, from dealers, or from private individuals who wished to sell.

While holding the Indians to the penny, he would never demand an overdue fee from the museums, charged extremely low fees, and in many instances paid expenses out of his own pocket when money wasn't available, occasionally waiving his fee altogether. These attitudes were not due to a lack of confidence but rather, to a highly developed sense of his proper place, part of the mythological baggage he had brought from England.

Sometimes the Indians would write to him for help. Some of their letters are reflections of the tragic grind of poverty coupled with ignorance of the world into which they had been thrust. There is no evidence that Newcombe tried to help the natives out with legal or financial assistance. At times he lived perilously close to the poverty line himself but when he could, he gave the Indians commissions to make things.

Newcombe sold almost entirely to museums and almost entirely by commission. Seldom did he offer anything for sale, and never did he press for a sale. Scrupulous to the penny, he once wrote to A. L. Kroeber of the University of California half apologetically for having spent fifty cents on

insurance on a four-hundred-and-fifty dollar order for two items. None of his energy went for the accumulation of money.

Due partly to his own fascination with totem poles, and partly to Dorsey's acquisitiveness, Newcombe became, in his day, one of the world's leaders as a supplier. After he sent his first specimen to Kew Gardens, he continued to send these spectacular carvings to Ottawa, Chicago, New York, the Smithsonian, Edinburgh, Cambridge, Oxford, the British Museum, Sydney, Melbourne, Bremen, and Toronto, and of course to the museum in Victoria.

Collecting poles was not an easy task. An available pole had to be found, negotiations made with its owner — negotiations which could be protracted — then the price settled. When a pole seemed secure suddenly a rival claimant might appear, or another collector with more money to spend. Removal from the ground and towing — in the early days by canoe, later by gas boat — to the nearest large port were fraught with peril. Newcombe was usually not present at this stage, but left it to a trusted native, often the owner of the pole, to carry through, taking over after the pole arrived in Victoria. Usually he preferred to cut and crate them for shipment and to have the museum do the restoring if any were needed. With each pole he sent its story and the meaning of its symbols. He did his best to document everything he collected.

On one occasion there was an unusual response at the pole's final destination. Samuel Barrett, curator of the Milwaukee Public Museum, had seen a pole in Newcombe's back yard in 1914. Ordered earlier by Baron von Hugel, a German friend of Dorsey's who taught at Cambridge, it had to be turned down by the university when the Baron was deported at the outbreak of the First World War. Seven years went by before Barrett was able to purchase the pole and, in 1921 it was shipped to Milwaukee. The 40-foot specimen did not receive a warm welcome. The churches objected because it was a heathen idol and they did not want it displayed near them; the art commission objected because it did not blend with the architecture of the museum building; the War Mothers objected to its being too near the statue of George Washington; and the librarians objected because they saw in it a plot by the museum to eclipse the building's use as a library. After many a stormy debate in and out of the city council, Barrett, with the aid of a detailed history of the pole as well as an affidavit from Newcombe affirming its authenticity, won the day, and the tall Haida pole was installed outside the museum where it stood for forty-two years. (In 1963 it was moved to the new museum one block away.)

Recognition by the provincial government came late and in the form of various commissions. The first, in 1909, was to take charge of the Indian display at the exhibition in New Westminster in honour of the explorer, Simon Fraser. A few years later, under Premier Richard McBride, Newcombe was at last given enough money to collect what remained of British Columbia's Indian treasures. He had stiff competition from outsiders, an example of which is contained in the following letter from the American collector, Lt George T. Emmons U.S.N., to Walter Hough, curator of ethnology at the Smithsonian:

> I came across on the Fraser river in British Columbia an archaeological and ethnological collection of one man gathered in the past eight or nine years from old village sites. It illustrates the archaeology of Lytton as described by Harlan Smith. I bought it because British Columbia is being gleaned by collectors and I knew it would be picked up by Newcombe or someone else at sight. It cost me $675.00 Do you want it? . . . British Columbia has at last aroused itself to the fact that it has lost its opportunity to gather a necessary collection to illustrate its native tribes and now Dr. Newcombe has been given ample funds and every means to gather everything remaining but it is too late.

Despite Emmons's predictions, Newcombe was able to make a creditable showing. He was allotted only four years when, in 1916, Kermode, who was hard pressed for funds, wanted to do away with the ethnology department altogether, and Newcombe was forced once again to respond to the requests of the American museums.

His publications were all on scientific subjects, with the exception of 'The First Circumnavigation of Vancouver Island', a spirited polemic in which he attributes that feat to Captain Vancouver and renders as false, the claim of the American Captain Kendrick of Boston. Unfortunately in all his writings he drew very little on his own rich storehouse of knowledge, preferring to synthesize materials from other scholars. Although he was urged to publish more, it was neither his forte nor his inclination and few articles materialized.

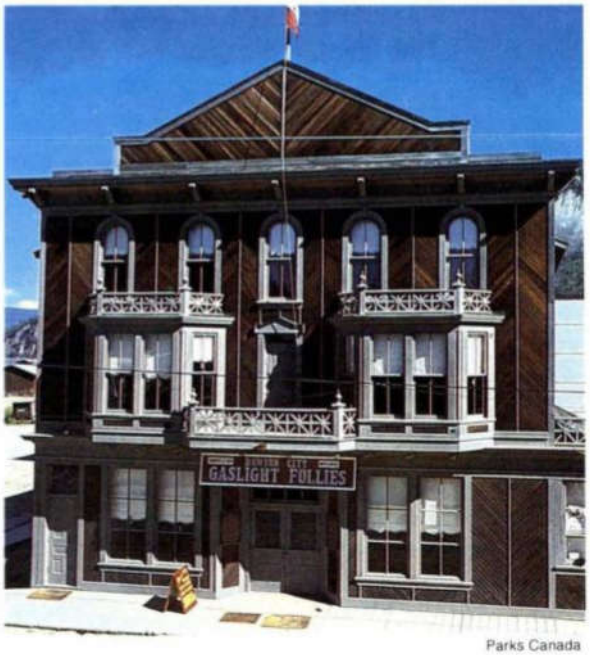
In October of 1924, his eyesight and hearing impaired, he made his last trip to the Queen Charlotte Islands. He had passed through many portals on the long road from alienist to collector — all in the pursuit of science — and the end came on 19 October a few days after his return from the Islands.

He left to his son Willy his books, collection of curios, and a mortgaged house; to his eldest son, a silver tea-set; his English railroad stocks were divided equally among his five children. But to museums around the world he left a priceless legacy, a legacy which otherwise would have been dispersed or destroyed. ◆

Gold Rush Theatre and the Palace Grand

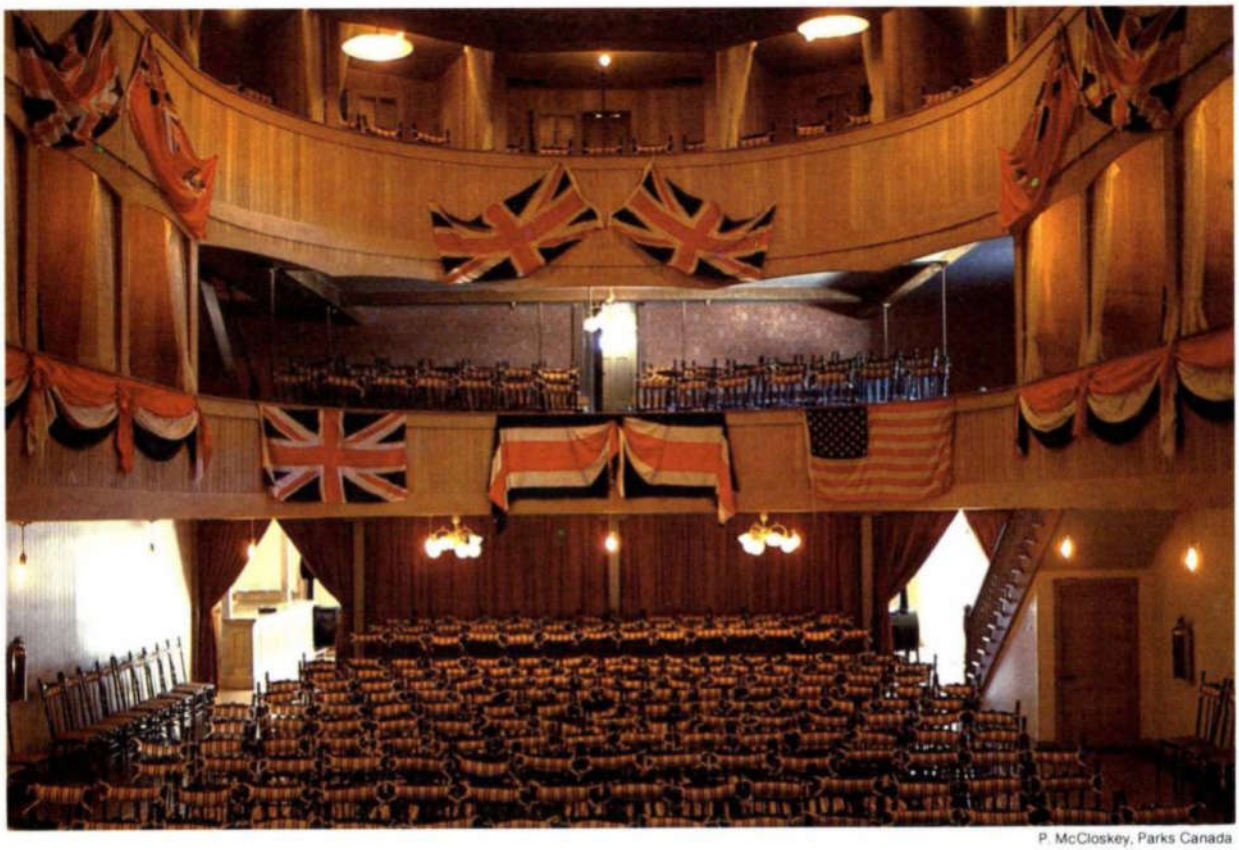
By Robert Coutts

The author is a historian with Parks Canada in Winnipeg.



Parks Canada

Every summer a large number of visitors to Dawson attend the performances at the Palace Grand which run every evening (except Monday) from 4 June to 12 September. In 1981 almost 28,000 people visited the theatre, where they were entertained by a Klondike variety show which included singing, dancing and comedy skits. A similar production is planned for this season. Other attractions in Dawson during the summer months include Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall, Robert Service's cabin, the Dawson City Museum, and the steamer 'Keno'.



P. McCloskey, Parks Canada

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD in the Klondike in 1896 created a boom-town environment which encouraged the growth of dance-halls, saloons and stock theatre houses. The association between theatre and frontier mining had previously flourished in California in 1849, Australia in 1851 and South Africa in 1886. At Dawson City this traditional link was once again renewed, but this time with a gaudy popularity that outstripped all predecessors.

The curious blend of late Victorian melodrama with the developing art of vaudeville produced an almost hybrid form of theatre in Dawson. Comedy, melodrama, musical concerts and sporting exhibitions were all combined to create a style of entertainment that borrowed as much from music-hall variety and the travelling tent show, as it did from the legitimate stage. In Dawson it was no surprise that, as one writer put it, 'an impressive left hook was more highly honoured than an organ-toned Hamlet.'

The style of vaudeville that was carried to the Yukon reflected the tastes of the mostly American population which had streamed north from San Francisco, Portland, Seattle and Tacoma. In the very early years of the gold rush, these audiences preferred the eclecticism of vaudeville to the more traditional offerings of legitimate theatre. Performances were fast paced, with singers, jugglers, comedians, and one-act melodramas all present on the same bill. Such a medley of entertainment styles provided the Dawson theatre patron with the symbols that simplified his experience and gave his life a meaning that was both clear and comprehensive. It helped to soften the disruptive experience of migration and acclimatization and allowed the individual miner to forget, for an evening at least, the precariousness of his position in a harsh and unforgiving environment.

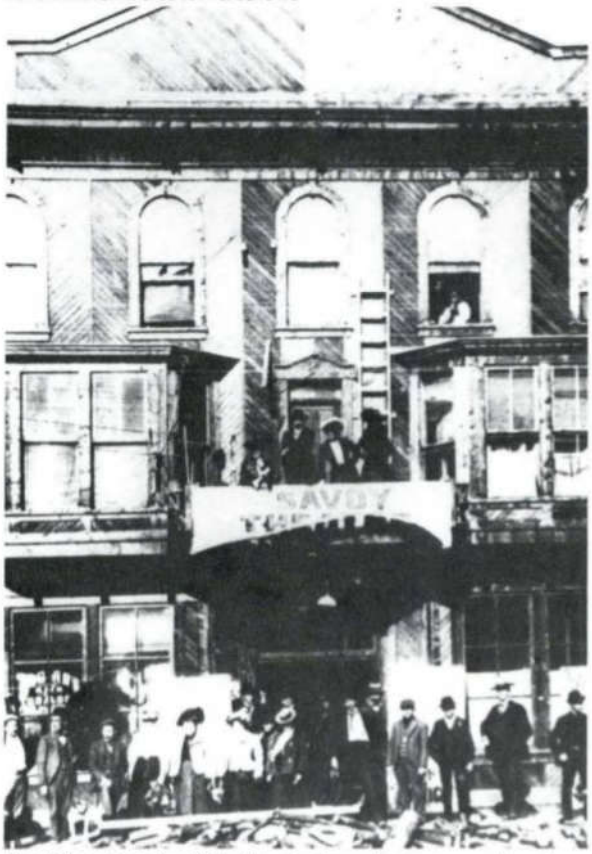
Gold rush vaudeville had an unmistakable appeal in Dawson. It worshipped success and revelled in its ostentatiousness, creating local stars who enjoyed a popularity bordering on adoration. It built theatres and 'variety palaces' that were scaled-down frontier copies of the great opera houses of Europe. Performances were, in essence, gaudy tributes to an unbridled capitalism and reflected the dizzying speed with which events moved and fortunes were won and lost.

Even before gold was discovered at Bonanza in 1896, small canvas-covered or wood-frame shanty theatres had existed in places like Circle City and Fortymile. Generally the layouts of these buildings were all similar. Divided into two sections, they housed both a saloon and a combination theatre and dance-hall. Performances were dreadful, and almost all of the 'actresses' doubled as prostitutes. With such colourful aliases as Mollie Fewclothes, Ethel the Moose and Sweetie the Pig, these women danced with the lonely miners and kept them drinking the cheap watered-down 'champagne' until the early hours of the morning. These saloon-theatres reflected what one author has labelled the 'urban schizophrenia' of frontier life. The social composition of western communities could be reduced to two component parts: one group clearly emulating the staid urban life of the metropolitan East, the other wanting to hang onto the frontier legacy of the mining towns. Consequently, 'variety saloons' or 'boxhouses' were developed which catered to both tastes, combining traditional saloon hospitality with theatre.

Although a number of theatres were in existence in Dawson by the summer of 1899, the *Klondike Nugget* called the newly constructed Palace Grand (or Grand Opera House as it was first named) a 'magnificent structure . . . that Dawson may well be proud of.' Its owner and builder was Arizona Charlie Meadows, undoubtedly one of the most colourful characters ever to come north over the Chilkoot Pass. Before arriving in Dawson in 1896, Meadows had already established a reputation as the 'King of the Cowboys' and the man who 'out-buffaloed Buffalo Bill Cody.' Raised in Arizona, he had reportedly fought in hand-to-hand combat with the Apache war chief Geronimo and by 1890 was touring Europe, Asia and Australia with his own Wild West show. In Dawson, Meadows purchased controlling interest in a number of mines around Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks and with the profits succeeded in establishing the *Klondike News*, a small illustrated journal which printed information on various claims in the Klondike area as well as biographical sketches on the wealthier mine owners. According to the *Klondike Nugget*, however, Meadows had grown tired of his role outside show business and, longing for the 'butterfly life' once more, he hired a local architect, C. H. Albertson, to design and build a theatre on a lot that Meadows had purchased on Third Avenue across from the site for the new post office.

The building itself was constructed in the miniature opera-house style and was quite lavish by Dawson standards. The façade consisted of a balcony between two oriel windows, each of which was topped with an ornate balustrade. Above the upper level, Albertson constructed a triangular gabled roof-end in the traditional style of western false-front architecture. Originally measuring forty by one hundred feet, the Palace Grand housed a saloon and theatre at street level, two apartments and a row of private boxes on the second floor, and another row of boxes and four smaller apartments on the upper level. The private boxes were utilized by the wealthier miners and gamblers and were outfitted with curtains which hid the occupants from the prying eyes of the patrons below. The original stage was quite small and behind

Camera Craft Studios, Santa Ana, California



The Palace Grand c. 1901. The theatre underwent a number of name changes; it was called the Savoy from August 1900 to September 1901.

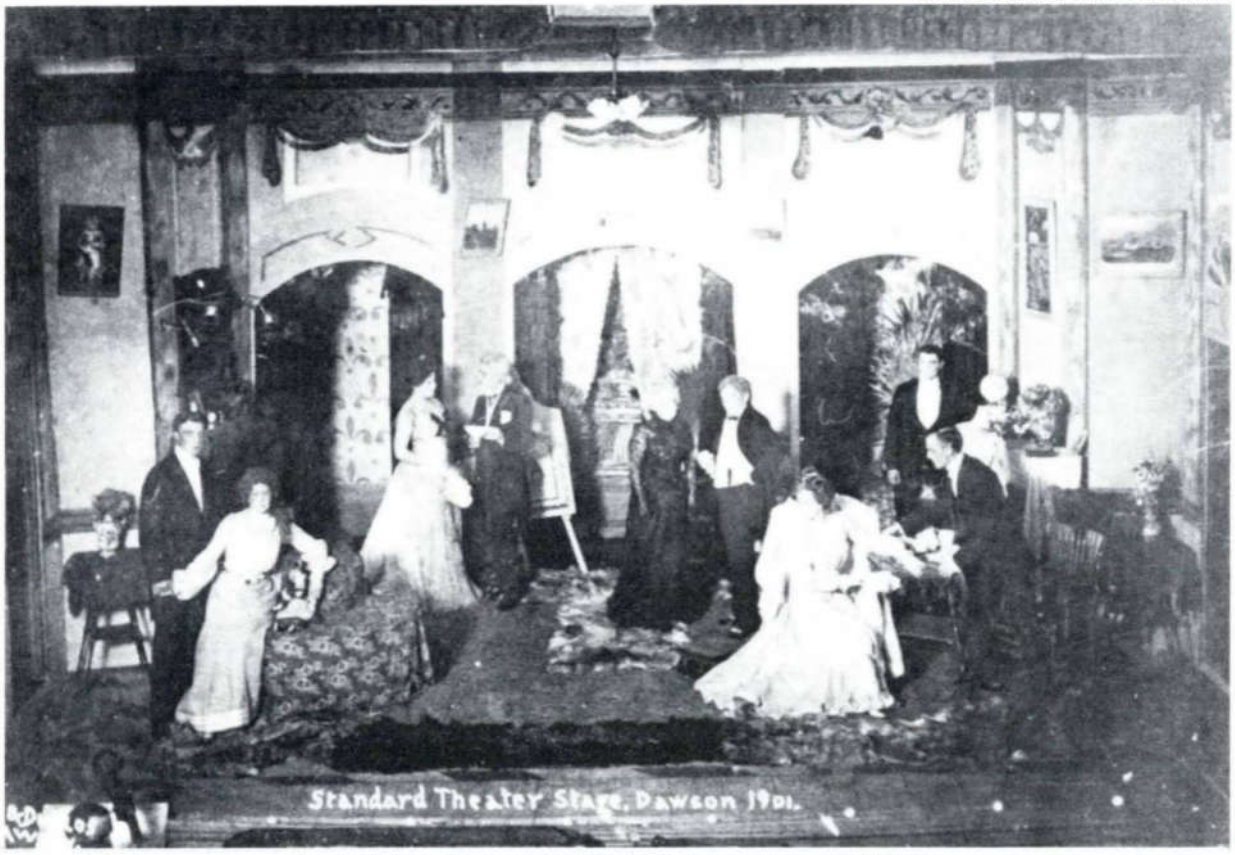
it were four dressing rooms for the stars of the show. Other actors used four smaller rooms that were located on the second floor. Fittings and furniture in the theatre were quite lavish. Blue and red plush graced the interior of the private boxes and embossed gold wallpaper was used extensively throughout the building. Unable to order opera seats from the outside, Meadows hastily acquired five hundred high-backed kitchen chairs for use on opening night. Calcium lamps served as footlights as well as providing the rest of the lighting throughout the theatre and saloon.

To a packed house on 18 July 1899, Meadows presented his first show. Essentially vaudeville, it consisted of a short melodrama, an elaborate musical, a chorus line, juggling acts, feats of skill, and a rendition of popular songs. The *Klondike Nugget* commented that the dancers proved to be the highlight of the evening, 'there being sufficient variety of shapeliness and loveliness to satisfy any and all tastes.' The newspaper did, however, point out some flaws in the opening-night performance. During the musical, the 'fairy queen' made her entrance riding in a luxurious barge escorted by a pair of swans. Alighting gracefully and 'with all the dignity of royalty' in front of her assembled subjects who paid homage as she passed, the queen advanced to the edge of the stage. But then, as the *Nugget* remarked,

Arizona Charlie Meadows at the Palace Grand Bar.

Historical Photography Collection, University of Washington Libraries

Provincial Archives of British Columbia #68275



Standard Theatre Stage, Dawson, 1901. Photograph by Larss and Duclos.

'instead of addressing her subjects upon grave and lofty matters of state, as seemed fitting the occasion,' she turned toward the audience and regaled them with a rendition of that masterpiece of harmony and sentiment entitled 'All Coons Look Alike to Me'. Such an example points out the burlesque quality of Dawson theatre and the blending of a traditional entertainment style with low comedy.

Whenever his audiences appeared bored or restless, Arizona Charlie would entertain the crowd with exhibitions of shooting skill. With his long black locks hanging below his shoulders and wearing a large sombrero and fringed buckskin jacket, Meadows would shoot cigarettes from his wife's mouth and glass balls from between her fingers. While this display seldom failed to elicit the appreciation of the paying customers, on one particular occasion, Charlie, with an errant shot, accidently removed the tip of his wife's thumb. Although she gamely continued with the performance, the shooting exhibitions ceased thereafter.

The saloon was crucial to the financial success of the Grand. Immediately inside the main doorway the visitor entered a brightly lit, smoke-filled room crowded with miners playing faro, roulette and poker. Scores of men, 'spitting, smoking, swearing, drinking and gambling', formed what Jeremiah Lynch in his memoir called, 'a gauntlet that no woman could run'. Faro was a popular game with the average miner; poker was the favourite of the big spenders and professional gamblers. Klondike folk legends abound with stories of two- and three-day games with stakes as high as $50,000 on a single hand, fortunes won and lost, and tragic suicides over gambling forfeitures. Miners who visited the Grand generally wagered with gold dust and the bar was equipped with a large set of brass weigh scales. The miners were preyed upon by the professional gamblers. Characters such as Sam Bonnifield, the Montana Kid and Harry Woolrich plied their trade at the Grand, and at Dawson's numerous other saloon-theatres. Many *chechakos* (the local name given to new arrivals) landed in Dawson with their life savings but were forced to leave after only a few weeks, broke and dispirited. Many never even made it to the goldfields. Although the North West Mounted Police fought a continual battle against the professionals, they flourished in the early days of the gold rush. Later, with the emergence of Dawson as a more settled community, the anti-saloon faction was

McBride Collection, Yukon Archives

Klondike Kate Rockwell, who was a great success at the Palace Grand with her 'flame act' and serpentine dance. On Christmas Eve, 1900, she was crowned 'Queen of the Klondike'.

successful in driving these men from the town.

After purchasing a ticket for fifty cents (which also entitled him to a free cigar) the customer was allowed from the saloon into the theatre. Almost immediately he would be set upon by one of the dance-hall girls who would attempt to cajole him into buying her a drink. Called 'percentage women' or 'box rustlers', their ultimate aim was to steer the miner into an upstairs box where they would try to persuade him to buy bottle after bottle of champagne. The *Dawson Daily News* remarked that should a man linger before assuming his seat for the show

> he is almost sure to be led astray by a pair of promising eyes and the first thing the poor chap knows he finds himself alone with his siren in one of the boxes — and there the fair one proceeds to . . . "take him down the line" to the tune of $1 a drink or $20 a small bottle of wine.

The women in the theatre could be grouped into roughly three classifications: the ill-rewarded aristocracy of dramatic actresses, the prettier and better-paid girls who performed on stage but did not mingle with the customers as part of their duties, and the variety girls who, after singing and dancing in the show, were expected to drink on percentage with the patrons. To their admirers they were 'all classes of beauties from all nations', but to their detractors they were more like 'ill-blended paper flowers, badly crumpled'. Luella Day, in her memoir, *The Tragedy of the Klondike*, commented that these women attracted the miners, not because they were 'raving beauties' but simply because they allowed a 'frank exposure of such charms as they imagined they had'.

Most of the dance-hall girls disguised their true identity under various pseudonyms. French names such as Blanche Lamonte or Minnie Latour were quite popular. Many were also known for distinguishing characteristics. Gertie Lovejoy had a diamond fastened between her two front teeth (and hence became Diamond Tooth Gertie), Daisy D'Avara wore a belt of seventeen twenty-dollar pieces given to her by a wealthy miner, and Flossie de Atley was referred to as the 'girl with the baby stare'. In his book, *Klondike*, Pierre Berton reveals that the Oregon Mare, so named because she whistled and squealed like a horse when she danced, wore a heavy chain of gold nuggets. A large woman, she was fond of forcing men off the sidewalk when she passed.

Generally, the women at the Palace Grand (the theatre had changed its name from the Grand Opera House in October 1899) favoured lemonade over strong liquor. Those who did indulge on a continual basis tended to become dissipated. Two exceptions were the Oatley Sisters, a popular singing act at the Grand. The Dawson correspondent for the *Dyea Trail* reported that

> their capacity for drink, if nothing else should attract a good patronage out of mere curiosity to see two girls who are put to bed drunk every night and who yet retain the bloom of youth, bright eyes, good voice and lively heels. They are the wonders of their kind.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1899, Meadows kept the entertainment moving at a furious pace. Plays, mostly melodramas and comedies, were given top billing although the 'specialty' acts also proved quite popular. The bill was usually changed every week, consequently little time was allowed for rehearsal or production. While the plays, as one observer remarked, 'need not be worse at any theatre' and the singing 'could hardly be surpassed in its eccentricities', the performances seemed to satisfy a widespread demand. Occasionally, attempts at elaborate scenery helped to cover up the amateur quality of the entertainment. *A Midnight Bell*, an early melodrama, advertised 'steaming cauldrons' and 'other effects never before seen in Dawson', as

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St Andrew's Ball at the Palace Grand, 30 November 1900. In addition to presenting theatre and variety acts, the Palace Grand played host to a number of balls and social evenings.

well as the usual contingent of 'beautiful dancing women'. A play written by Meadows entitled *The Arizona Scout* had a collapsible bridge constructed over a large tank of water eight feet deep. In the play a live horse was dropped through the bridge and into what the script called 'a raging mountain torrent'. In the Grand's production of *Camille*, star actress Babette Pyne was at one point to go to the window to call for her friend Madam Prudence, played by Nellie Lewis. 'Madam Prudence, Madam Prudence', the heroine called over and over again, but no Prudence appeared. Finally, as was reported by the reviewer for the *Klondike Nugget*, 'the frowsled head and flushed face' of Nellie Lewis poked from between the curtains of an overhead box. 'Madam Prudence ain't here' she yelled, 'call away all you like, Madam Prudence ain't a-comin' tonight. Don't you think she's comin' tonight.' Though physically carried from the box, the obstreperous and very drunk Nellie refused to go on stage and the play continued without her.

Throughout the winter of 1899-1900 the Palace Grand remained filled to capacity almost every evening. The plays presented were many and varied, from light farces like *Stillwater Willie's Wedding Night* and *Naughty Girls*, to the musical *King for a Day* and the melodrama *The Black Flag or Brother Against Brother*. 'Blood-curdling melodramas' were particularly popular in Dawson, perhaps because, as Richard O'Conner in *Gold, Dice and Women* put it, 'men who face death squarely in their daily experience prefer more gore than ordinary audiences'. This period also saw the meteoric rise to local stardom of a number of performers. Klondike Kate Rockwell, who had recently arrived with the Jackson and O'Brien Company, was a huge success with her 'flame act' and serpentine dance. Comedian John Mulligan, singer Beatrice Lorne, and nine-year-old Margie Newman who tearfully sang of hearth and home while miners threw thousands of dollars worth of nuggets at her feet, were all enormously popular. Part of a typical evening's performance might also include the 'stereopticon slides and moving pictures' of Professor Parks. The 'wondroscope' as it was called, showed grainy movies of the Spanish-American War and the sinking of the *Manila*. These very primitive films were increasingly popular in

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An actress in the Klondike.

Dawson after 1900.

A traditional favourite at the Grand was the play *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Arthur Walden, in his memoir, *A Dog-Puncher on the Yukon*, remarked that while he had seen the play a number of times, he had never seen the parts of Eliza and Simon Legree played so well. He could not say as much, though, for the pack of bloodhounds. These were represented by a lone malamute puppy, dragged in a sitting position across the stage by an invisible wire and 'yelling its full displeasure to the gods'.

Besides the usual fare of theatre and variety acts, the Grand played host to a number of balls and social evenings. The Sourdough Masked Ball was a popular event and the number of elaborate and exotic costumes demonstrated the resourcefulness of the town's citizens. At one such costume party in the winter of 1901, a prize was to be awarded to the woman wearing the best costume. A particularly husky girl, with long hairy arms and legs, was seen prancing around the dance floor. Though she was elegantly gowned she behaved outrageously, throwing her dancing partners around the room. Filing past the reviewing stand each contestant was asked whom she was dressed to represent. Many of the famous women of history, including Marie Antoinette and Joan of Arc, put in an appearance that night, but when the big girl was asked to identify herself she bellowed out, 'I'm a whore!' The ensuing scuffle knocked off her wig and glasses, revealing the features of Addison Mizner, a local practical joker and mischief-maker.

Although the Palace Grand was the scene for many of Dawson's more 'exciting' theatre presentations and social evenings, it had, by 1901, entered into a period of decline. As Dawson became a more and more settled community and gold strikes in Alaska siphoned off some of its population, attempts were made to bring legitimate theatre to the Klondike. Those left behind, generally storekeepers and small-time entrepreneurs, were not predisposed to the earlier variety of frontier theatre and demanded a higher class of entertainment. Unfortunately their numbers were not sufficient to financially support this particular style and the theatre went through a number of financial troubles and management changes. After 1901 the Palace Grand remained closed for long periods of time and even though valiant attempts were made to resurrect its former popularity, the theatre became a money-losing operation. Arizona Charlie Meadows, sensing the changing times in Dawson, sold the building in 1901 and returned south.

Subsequent managers operated the theatre off and on for the next twenty years. They remodelled the interior on a number of occasions, closed down the saloon and brought in professional troupes from the outside. Attempts at making the theatre commercially successful were failures, as Dawson died the inevitable death of all gold rush boom towns. Not even the introduction of five-reel films from Hollywood after World War I, nor the discontinuation of costly live acts could save the theatre and it was closed down in the winter of 1923. Re-opened again for a brief period in the late 1930s, the building operated until shortly after the start of World War II, whereupon Dawson's dwindling population forced its management to close the doors for the final time.

In 1960, under the auspices of the Federal Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, the original building, now ramshackle and in danger of collapsing, was torn down and faithfully reconstructed. Opened to the public in 1962 it continues to present gold rush plays, sketches and musical reviews to the thousands of tourists who visit Dawson every summer. Today it is considered an integral part of the 'Klondike experience' in Dawson.

While in its prime for only a few short years at the turn of the century, the Palace Grand represented the singular character of Klondike theatre and helps provide the context from which to view the vagaries of the gold rush mentality. ◆

A freight gang hauls fish by horse-drawn sleigh to Riverton, Manitoba, in 1920.

Icelandic Fisheries on Lake Winnipeg

By Karen Magnusson

Mrs Magnusson, born in Manitoba of Icelandic descent, has published a number of articles based on family diaries. Her husband is still associated with the Lake Winnipeg fisheries as a buyer.

Photographs, unless otherwise credited, are from the Manitoba Archives.

FISHING ON LAKE WINNIPEG in the late 1800s was an important industry for the Icelandic settlers who arrived at Gimli, Manitoba, in 1875. Although they were seafaring men by long tradition, the method of winter fishing through ice proved to be a challenging and arduous way of life during their first years in Canada.

At first fishing was done from Gimli and Hnausa, mainly as a food supplement and as exchange for staples in the local stores. Gradually a need was seen for preserving and marketing the fish. In the area along Lake Winnipeg and inland, known as New Iceland, the first fish-buyers were the Hannesson Brothers of Gimli. They put up an ice-house there in order to keep the fish fresh and they paid the fishermen one cent per pound for pickerel. By 1892 Sigurdson Brothers of Hnausa, Manitoba, had started a fish-packing business, paying three and one-half cents per pound for the fish at Hnausa. They

Jon Gislason and Hermann Thorsteinson ice fishing on Lake Winnipeg, February 1928.

were followed by several other fish-packers: Magnus Magnusson and Tomas Bjornson at Hnausa, and Kristjon Finnson at Riverton. This was a strong inducement to the Icelandic settlers to fish for money with which to buy staples, and to pay their yearly taxes, which at that time were about twelve dollars per year for a quarter section of land.

In the 1890s the fishermen began to travel north along Lake Winnipeg as far as Grindstone and Bull Head. They started off for the winter season as soon as the ice was strong enough to support hand-drawn sleighs. On these sleighs were piled the fishermen's nets, food, tools and bedding. The nets, made with No 10 twine, were set by pushing them under the ice with poles. Whitefish were the most sought-after catch.

The most difficult problem seemed to be the means of transporting the fish to market. Teams of oxen were used at first for freighting the fish from Hnausa to the Guest Fish Company, at Winnipeg, or to Booth Fisheries at Selkirk. Freight charges were thirty-five cents per hundredweight from Hnausa to Selkirk by oxen. Sometimes the trip out would take six to seven days with the freighter making a profit of $1.50 per trip. On his trip north to pick up the fish the freighter would be loaded with groceries and supplies.

Magnus Magnusson of Hnausa, who began fishing on his own in 1892 and who later became a fish-buyer, wrote in his diary:

'When I first started fishing I purchased for my own use 30 whitefish nets, eight pickerel nets, two axes, two ice-picks, four dogs, and one tent. I do not remember what I paid for these goods, but I do remember how I felt. I was filled with dreams and hopes of becoming an independent and rich man.

'The dogs I purchased were beautiful dogs, especially Kallo the lead dog, who was coal-black. I felt indeed that I had the most wonderful dog team on Lake Winnipeg. I had this team for a number of years and Kallo especially, became like a dear friend to me.'

Dog-teams were a familiar sight on Lake Winnipeg during the fishing season. The dogs resembled husky dogs and were able to travel long distances. At night their lonely howling could be heard for miles around.

The fishermen had to be strong and tough to withstand the rugged life on the lake. They walked great distances every day back and forth as they lifted their nets. Their canvas parkas, warmly lined, had the hoods edged with fur to protect their faces from freezing. Often the fishermen would go without food from breakfast until they got back to their campsite in the late afternoon. The most dreaded happenings for the fishermen were the blizzards that came up suddenly, obliterating their campsites.

The campsites were often primitive: a tent at first, or a log cabin hastily set up along the shoreline, preferably close to a sheltering spruce bluff. For those fishermen who travelled straight east on Lake

The Mitchell fish camp on Black Island in Lake Winnipeg. Undated.

Winnipeg from Gimli and Hnausa, the campsite was usually a caboose — a house-like structure on a sleigh. The caboose or camp would be set out on a vast and lonely stretch of endless ice and snow. These camp shelters were heated with tin heaters, which sometimes made the room so hot that the door would have to be opened, even in -35°C. weather. On the other hand, by morning, the camp would be so cold that the water in the pail would be frozen.

At night the knitted mitts, frozen during lifting of the nets, would be washed out and strung on a line in the camp to dry. After a hearty meal, the men would tell and retell stories about fishing experiences. There was always a strong bond of camaraderie among the fishermen that made for lasting friendships.

When oxen were used for freighting from northern points on the lake, the trip sometimes took up to three weeks; gradually the slow animals were replaced by horses. The fish were stacked in rows on a toboggan-type sleigh, covered with canvas, well tied down, and sent on to Sandy Bar, located on the lakeshore just east of Riverton, Manitoba. Here they were put in large boxes on a freighting sleigh and pulled by a team of horses to Selkirk.

At first there were no stopping places on the trips to northern fishing camps. Sometimes the freighters had to spend the night in the open, sheltered among the trees or, if they were fortunate they might find an abandoned fisherman's cabin. Gradually, regular stopping places, such as those run by the Ramsays, Darcys and Baldwinsons, were located along the regular freight routes. The charge was fifty cents per night, for a man and his team. The freight charges from Little Tamarac to Selkirk, a distance of 140 miles, were $1.35 per hundredweight.

As fishing progressed, freighting conditions improved. Long freight trains became a familiar sight on Lake Winnipeg. After a particularly bad winter in 1892, Sandy Vens, an enterprising man from Clandeboye, Manitoba, designed a snow-plough to clear the way for the freight trains. The sight of the freight trains — long black rows of dots on the vast sheet of shimmering snow — always gladdened the hearts of the fishermen as they lifted their nets. Their arrival meant a fresh supply of groceries, a letter from a loved one, or perhaps a parcel and news from home.

As the freight train drew near they could see the horses, white with frost, and hear in the cold crisp air their snorting sounds and the creak of the sleighs as they passed over the snow. The lead teams pulled the snow-plough, clearing a swath for the sleighs behind. Next came the caboose where the driver usually sat snug and cosy, ensconced in his travelling home. The caboose had a door, one or two windows, as well as an opening in front for the horses' reins to pass through. Very often the caboose was lined with kraft paper. It had heaters, a table, a few shelves, benches, and bunks for sleeping. Tents were extended from the

Crates of fish arrive from the winter fish camps by horse-drawn sleighs. 1916.

sides of the caboose to shelter the horses at night. Behind the caboose came the sleighs loaded down with boxes; the drivers often walked part of the time to keep warm.

Once the freighting gang reached the fish camps there was a great bustle and shouting while news about the fishing and the journey north was exchanged.

After the empty boxes had been unloaded and replaced by boxes packed with fish, the teamsters yelled out a command to the horses and off they went, either to the next camp or on to the last lap of their journey into town. Once again the freight trains became small black dots on the horizon; then gradually they disappeared from sight. Once again the campsite and the fishermen were the only visible signs of life on the vast white lake.

In 1892 Magnus Magnusson of Hnausa, Manitoba, started on his first fishing venture with nets, a few supplies, a tent to live in and four dogs; he gradually built up his venture into a fish-packing business at Hnausa. There, in later years, he would outfit up to 40 men. By that time the railroad had come through so the fish were shipped by rail from a railway siding located close to his packing shed at Hnausa. Often in the evenings, as he puffed on his pipe, he would meditate on the vagaries of the fish market. In these quiet moments he would sometimes record in his diary the events of the day:

April 18, 1921: I went to Selkirk today to see the North Fish Co. about getting payment for the fish I shipped to them this winter. I shipped over 20 carloads of fish, at a price previously agreed upon. Now the Company is bankrupt and I stand to lose $13,000.

April 20, 1921: This has been the mildest winter I remember. My fish business has been the most difficult one I have had so far. The expense has been very great as I outfitted 40 fishermen. The fish catch was very good but with the North Fish Co. going bankrupt, the entire winter's work and expense will be a loss to me.

November 8, 1924: A terrible storm has been raging today, with a strong south wind. Frost came early and there is ice along the Lake [Winnipeg]. The boats cannot land at Sandy Bar on account of the ice. I have many nets in the water and fear I may not be able to pull them up.

December 8, 1928: Winter fishing can certainly be treacherous. Today we received news that Harry Potoski had drowned at Rabbit Point on Lake Winnipeg. Harry and Bill Moroski had been setting nets on weak ice. On their way back to shore the ice beneath them broke up and both fell in. Bill was able to reach out for a hold on the sleigh, until someone rescued him. Harry slipped under the ice and could not get up.

This is indeed sad news for Harry's family. He was a good and faithful man, well liked by all who knew him. He had been in my employ for a number of years.

April 23, 1929: Helgi Johannson arrived today from Berens River, where he had been taking up ice. Driving back home by car, it suddenly went through the ice, out from Rabbit Point. Helgi was able to force open the car door, then crawl out and up. He was taken to safety from there by someone who was near by.

March 3, 1932: The fish market is now at an all-time low. Those of us who have been buying fish from the fishermen have had to let them go as the fish cannot be sold. All fish-buyers are in the same predicament.

Fish nets at Warren's Landing, Lake Winnipeg, 1907.

December 11, 1932: There have been a great many fishermen in and out of here today, because of an incident connected with the fish business. One of the fish Inspectors had seized some nets at stations on the lake and there is controversy over possible law-breaking.

Halli Bjornson came from north with a request that a representative for the fishermen should be sent to speak with the man in charge at the Department of Fisheries in Winnipeg, regarding this matter. My son Sveinn was chosen to go to Winnipeg to speak on behalf of the fishermen and to stress how they stand to lose their nets and their livelihood if the Fisheries Dept. does not lift the ban on the fishing area concerned. The Fisheries Department has now sent a wire to the Inspector, stating that the fishermen should be allowed to set their nets in the area which the Inspector had considered to be a closed area.

For this intervention on their behalf by Sveinn, the fishermen are truly thankful.

K. Magnusson

A typical fish camp, built of logs, with nets extended to dry. Lake Winnipeg, 1930s.

January 27, 1934: Steini Sigmundson set out today by tractor, from Riverton to Little Georges Island, where he has his winter fishing operation. He is one of the first men here to use a tractor with a plow, for freighting.

February 6, 1934: From our home here we see the cabooses coming in off the lake. The horses are white with hoar frost, as their sweat and breath freezes on the cold, crisp air. The driver sits snug and warm in his caboose, as the heater in there is kept red hot to heat the room up. The freight teamsters usually travel about 12 miles or more, straight east from here, to pick up the fish from the fishermen.

Many of the fishermen have canvas cabooses to live in and these can be dangerous because it has happened that they have been uprooted by strong winds. In that vast area of ice and snow there is no shelter from the cruel wind.

These thoughts made me think of all the hard work, as well as the loneliness which are a part of the fisherman's life. These men must leave their families behind as they venture out to make their livelihood. Their womenfolk at home worry too, about the dangers that can befall their husbands, should a terrible blizzard come up suddenly, obliterating their view of the campsite.

* * *

The way of life of the fishermen on Lake Winnipeg was often fraught with hardship and adversity. However, to fishermen such as Magnus Magnusson, these were minor obstacles to be overcome by determination and hard work. ◆

The hundred or so 'Young, Active, Stout Men' recruited in 1811 by Charles McLean, the Hudson's Bay Company's agent in the western Highlands of Scotland, were promised that they could acquire land in the Red River settlement at the completion of their engagements. McLean stated, in effect, that the climate at Red River was the same as at Montreal, Canada, Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island.

Drawing by Rob Gillespie.

The Affair at Stornoway, 1811

By J. M. Bumsted

Dr Bumsted is a professor of history at the University of Manitoba.

IN BOTH the contemporary controversy and subsequent historiography dealing with the founding of Red River, the North West Company has been charged (or credited) with mounting a persistent and successful opposition to the fledgling Selkirk colony. Lord Selkirk and his associates, of course, were always ready to blame all disasters upon the interference of North Westers, and such accusations were hardly unsubstantiated, since the Canadian fur traders certainly did their level best to hinder and ultimately to destroy Red River. While in public the North West Company innocently protested any allegations of involvement in Red River troubles, in private leading North Westers were often quite prepared to take the credit for any debâcles. On the whole, the subsequent debate among historians has not been over the question of the North West Company's involvement in harassing Red River, but over the issue of whether such opposition was legitimate and justified. Yet, one wonders whether the claims and charges of contemporaries ought always to be accepted at face value in these matters.

Part of the tradition of the founding of Red River, for example, has become the successful interference of British associates of the North West Company with the first departure of settlers from Stornoway (on the island of Lewis in the Hebrides) in July of 1811. For Lord Selkirk this incident was the first illustration of the implementation of earlier threats made in London against the colony by Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Edward Ellice, and as evidence he offered letters seized at Fort William in 1816 in which Simon MacGillivray openly boasted of the success of his policy of harassment. In a subsequent memorandum relating the early background of the colony's development, Selkirk himself put the case extremely well, writing of the late arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company vessels at Stornoway in mid-July 1811:

> During all this time some emissaries of the North West Company were employed in attempting to debauch these people, in which they were seconded by Mr Reed [sic], Collector of the Customs, a near relation of Sir A. Mackenzie. The Inverness newspaper had for several weeks been filled with scurrilous letters under the signature of "Highlander" misrepresenting the service of the Hudson's Bay Company and the proposed settlement at Red River. These letters have since been ascertained to be the production of Mr Simon MacGillivray. . . . On the embarkation of the men at Stornoway, the Collector made the best use in his power of the act for regulating the transport of emigrants, according to one of the clauses of the act any emigrant who on the clearing out of the ship, expresses a desire to renounce his passage and remain is to be allowed to disembark. This clause the worthy Collector dwelt upon and interpreted to the men, as entitling them to withdraw from their engagement with the Company, notwithstanding their having received considerable advances of money on account of their wages. This doctrine was controverted by the Company's officers on board the ships, but in the mean time several of the men, terrified by the stories which had been circulated by the emissaries of the North West Company and encouraged by the support of the Collector, made their escape over the side of the ship into a boat which was alongside and which was ready to receive them.

In this passage, fairly respresentative of contemporary accounts of the Stornoway incident produced by Selkirk's supporters in the controversy over Red River — and of the story as told by later historians — Selkirk chose to place the blame for the near-disaster at Stornoway squarely on the shoulders of the North West Company and its local collaborators. But the troubles at Stornoway can certainly be explained in other terms which have little to do with North West Company opposition. A number of little publicized factors ought to be taken into account in attempting to understand what happened at Stornoway. These factors include the enormous confusion over recruiting for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1811, which would have caused great difficulty at the time of embarkation under any conditions; the problems the Stornoway customs collectors had recently experi-

enced over fraudulent abuse of the regulations governing the transport of emigrants to North America; and finally, the curious fact that the only evidence available that a Stornoway customs official had been influenced by anyone indicates that the individual involved was not John Reid, but his colleague James Robertson, who received over £1,000 from the Hudson's Bay Company (mainly in expense money) for his assistance in the Stornoway embarkation. Taken together, these factors would indicate that insofar as Simon MacGillivray and the North Westers in Britain had influenced the situation in Stornoway described by Selkirk, their main contribution had been in London's delay of final approval of the colony's grant to Selkirk (which helped set off the subsequent chain of events) rather than in any serious interference on the spot.

In order to appreciate the situation at Stornoway in the summer of 1811, it would perhaps be best to begin with a bit of chronology. Selkirk and Sir Alexander Mackenzie had begun purchasing stock in the Hudson's Bay Company in 1808, and Selkirk attended his first meeting of the General Court on 29 November 1809. On 6 December 1809 the Earl wrote both Captain John MacDonald on Prince Edward Island and Captain Miles Macdonell in Upper Canada hinting at a possible military command in a private expedition. MacDonald certainly got the message that the appointment would involve a North American settlement of Highlanders, but for reasons of health refused to be considered. On 10 February 1810 Selkirk informed Macdonell that the business mentioned in December had 'not yet taken such a shape as to leave me at liberty to enter into fuller explanation', but Macdonell was to be ready to come to Britain when required. The so-called 'Retrenching Scheme' devised by Andrew Wedderburn-Colvile, Selkirk's brother-in-law, called for a continuation of the fur trade, the recruitment of more aggressive Company servants from the Highlands and western islands of Scotland, and the establishment of a colony at Red River; it was submitted to the Board of Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company on 7 March 1810, and was implemented over the remainder of that year. Eleven months after the initial unveiling of the new plan, the Board of Directors on 6 February 1811 resolved that Wedderburn-Colvile request Selkirk to 'lay before the Committee the terms in which he will accept a grant of Land, within the Territories of the Hudson's Bay Company, and specifying what restrictions he is at present prepared to consent to be imposed on the settlers.' According to Selkirk's later recollections, most of the Board at its discussions with him on 13 and 20 February 1811 was willing to grant him land without strings attached, since the resulting colony was an integral part of the 'New System', but it was finally agreed that in return for his land grant, Selkirk would — beginning in 1812 — take over recruitment of personnel for the Company in the Highlands. This understanding was accepted by the Directors on 6 March 1811, and the proposals taken to the General Court of the Company on 22 May 1811.

In the meantime, on 19 April 1811, Charles McLean of Coll and Donald Mackenzie of Stornoway had advertised in the *Inverness Journal* for 'A FEW YOUNG, ACTIVE, STOUT MEN for the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, at their Factories and Settlements in America'. McLean had been appointed Hudson's Bay Company agent in the western Highlands to engage men for service in December 1810, as had Captain Roderick McDonald for the Glasgow region. No evidence exists to suggest that Selkirk had anything to do with either of these appointments — or that of Colin Robertson to recruit in the Orkneys. The Company secretary, Alexander Lean, corresponded with McLean and informed him (based upon the Wedderburn-Colvile memorandum) that 'the Company have resolved to encourage a Settlement at a part of their Territories which enjoys a good climate & is of a favorable soil & situation in others respects', suggesting that the 100 or more recruits McLean was asked to provide could acquire land there at the completion of their engagements. McLean reproduced Lean's words virtually verbatim in his advertisement, and then added some flourishes of his own, to the effect that the climate was the same as at Montreal, Canada, Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island (all familiar to the Highlander from past emigrations) and that wheat, oats, barley, Indian corn, potatoes, hemp, flax and tobacco would thrive on the soil. These comments were intended by the recruiting agent to assure prospective emigrants that the settlement would be in territory little different from that known to Highlanders, although McLean had no real notion where the proposed settlement would be, later admitting that he had placed the advertisement as a routine matter 'without consulting my employers'.

To the surprise of Selkirk and his supporters, at the meeting of the Company's General Court on 22 May 1811, Sir Alexander Mackenzie rose from the floor and vehemently opposed the grant to Selkirk, forcing an adjournment to 30 May and a formal vote on the proposals for a land grant. The meeting on 30 May, after much discussion and the submission of a formal protest by seven stockholders, including Edward Ellice and Mackenzie, accepted the Selkirk scheme by a show of hands. While all this manoeuvring was taking place, the Hudson's Bay Company agents were collecting recruits in the north of Scotland and Ireland, and Captain Miles Macdonell (who had responded to Selkirk's invitation to lead the party) was cooling his heels in London awaiting formal

Public Archives of Canada

The H B C ships 'Prince of Wales' and 'Eddystone' in Hudson Strait, August 1819. From a drawing by Robert Hood.

approval of the grant. Macdonell had gone to Ireland, where Selkirk had spent some time in 1810, but so far as is known, the recruitment of Irish labourers was entirely in the hands of B. H. Everard of Sligo, who again had been chosen by the Company rather than by Selkirk. It would be foolish to attempt to argue that Selkirk was not privy to the activities of the Board of Directors, but it should be emphasized that until his grant was formally approved on 30 May 1811, he had not taken an active role in recruiting either in the Highlands or in Ireland. That immediately after the grant Selkirk wrote to Alexander MacDonald of Dalilia to take charge of his Highland recruiting operations suggests that he had not previously been particularly close to the business of collecting new employees. The men would be led to Hudson Bay by Miles Macdonell (who *was* Selkirk's choice) and William Hillier, but they had been recruited by Company agents under Company orders. Selkirk's intention in 1811 was merely to detach a few labourers from the Company party to begin the lengthy process of preparing the settlement for subsequent emigration.

Even after the favourable vote on 30 May, Miles Macdonell and the Company ships (the *Eddystone*, the *Prince of Wales*, and the *Edward & Anne*, the last especially chartered for the voyage at a cost of £2,500) had difficulty in getting north to pick up the new recruits. They did not weigh anchor from the south of England until late June, being further delayed waiting for convoy and by contrary winds. The vessels therefore did not manage to arrive at Stornoway until 17 July, by which time the recruits, most of whom had been awaiting passage since early June, were understandably restive. The tiny Highland village of Stornoway was not well equipped to accommodate over 100 strangers, and there was little to do except drink and grumble. The account of 'Highlander' in the *Inverness Journal* of the climate in Hudson Bay, the distance of the region from the remainder of Canada, and the dangers from hostile Indians, may have added fuel to an already unhappy situation, but it did not create it. Even without such insinuations and veiled threats, Miles Macdonell would have experienced a great deal of difficulty in successfully embarking the waiting men, who has been hastily gathered by a number of recruiters under quite varying terms and conditions.

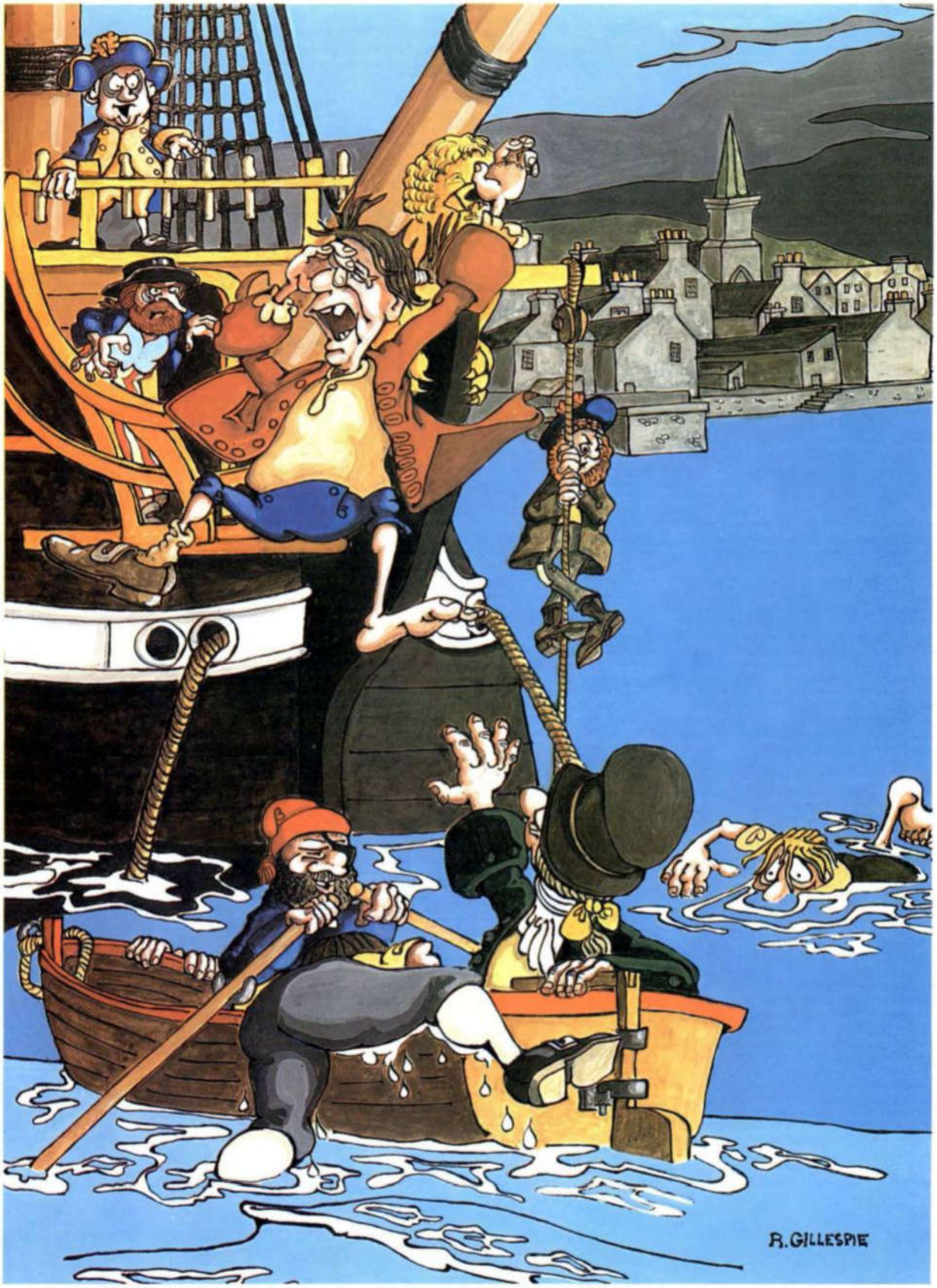
Particularly disruptive were the terms under which Captain Roderick McDonald had collected men at Glasgow, including a number of young 'writers' (or clerks) intended for the Company's service. These men were virtually by definition more highly educated and status conscious than were the labourers who made up the bulk of the prospective party. They had not only demanded and received promises of high wages at an annually augmented scale, but claimed they had been guaranteed treatment as cabin passengers on the voyage and complained they had not been given copies of their indentures. Captain McDonald later insisted he had not promised cabin accommodation, but merely offered 'a cabin, or apartment in the ships entirely separate from the men, but what that cabin was he could not describe'.

Moreover, the writers had been promised mattresses and blankets before departure, and such luxuries were simply not available for purchase at Stornoway. Failure to provide them confirmed a suspicion that they would not, on shipboard, be treated in a style befitting their station. The entire recruitment procedure was called into question when the clerks were informed by Macdonell that the Glasgow agent had exceeded his authority regarding salaries, and there would be no annual increments. As for the twenty labourers collected at Glasgow, ten had been promised salaries higher than their fellows and the remaining labourers recruited in Ireland and the Orkneys, and although Macdonell had endeavoured to persuade them to take land in lieu of the extra salary, they refused and naturally regarded the attempt as insidious. As Macdonell admitted to Selkirk, 'it is an unfortunate circumstance that they were engaged different from the others, which will always be a source of grievance and discontent.' The Glasgow contingent was clearly restless and unhappy. Unfortunately for Macdonell, he was unable to sail swiftly enough to prevent the problems from becoming serious ones.

Macdonell and his employer always regarded the bureaucratic delays in embarkation brought about by the Stornoway customs officers as part of the North Wester plot against the settlement, but such an interpretation is considerably belied by the customs records of Stornoway, which still survive in the Scottish Record Office in Edinburgh. The port's collectors were legally bound, in clearing passengers for North America, to do so in terms of the so-called 'Ship's Passenger Act' (43 George III c. 56) which had been passed by Parliament in 1803 to prevent Highland emigration to North Amercia by strictly regulating the conditions of passage. Selkirk had always opposed the act as inequitable restriction (and he would in 1813 win its amendment by Parliament to exclude Company vessels from its provisions), but he had no reason to assume that it was not operative in 1811 or that its application was directed solely against his venture. The Stornoway officials were consistent in their enforcement of the act whenever emigrant vessels cleared their port, and indeed, only a few weeks before the arrival of the Company vessels the collectors had learned of a 'very daring and Criminal deception' which had been practised against them the previous year. One of the provisions of 43 George III c. 56 was that every vessel carrying emigrants should have a qualified surgeon on board, and in 1810 a ship headed for Prince Edward Island had cleared Stornoway with a 'surgeon' using another man's credentials. Having only recently been deceived, it was perfectly understandable that the customs officers should attempt to be strict in processing the Company's papers. According to the collectors, and there is much evidence to substantiate their position, they were in the end forced to bypass many of the regulations in order to process the ships as rapidly as they did. Unable to obtain stamped paper, they were obliged to grant bonds on ordinary paper. Moreover, the surgeons on board the *Prince of Wales* and the *Edward & Anne* could not produce their credentials, and there was considerable question over whether the Company had authority to export oatmeal and hulled barley to Hudson Bay; Secretary Lean later apologized for the confusion over the meal.

Given the general officiousness of customs collectors in Scottish outports, the point to be remarked is not the delays but the willingness of the Stornoway collectors to overlook many technicalities they could have applied. Here the relevant fact was not John Reid's alleged relationship by marriage to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, but the documentable close connection between his colleague James Robertson and the Hudson's Bay Company. Robertson had been appointed Company agent at Stornoway on 30 May 1811 and charged with 'all the Men engaged for the Service who are addressed to your care'. Miles Macdonell testified to Robertson's assistance, writing to Selkirk 'He has been indefatigable to forward our affairs & has rendered important services in every manner in his power.' As Macdonell put it, 'Without his assistance we should not have succeeded so well as we have done.' It was, after all, Robertson who housed and fed nearly 100 men for over a month — with 'enormous outlays' of money, of course — and kept the party together until the tardy arrival of the transports. Probably the knowledge that Robertson was 'one of ours' contributed to the suspicion of Macdonell that John Reid's lack of equal enthusiasm was a result of his being 'one of theirs', although there exists no evidence except Macdonell's assertion to substantiate this charge. Reid was clearly the stickler for regulations between the two collectors, but given the circumstances this attitude was understandable. Reid unquestionably was opposed to Robertson, partly because Robertson was overly solicitous for the Company's welfare and partly because he had superseded a member of Reid's family as Company agent in Stornoway.

While the Company's captains were struggling with the formalities of customs clearance a certain 'Captain McKenzie' (apparently the Donald Mackenzie who had advertised with Charles McLean in April) was attempting to recruit for the army among the new employees, going so far as to give the King's shilling to some of the men. Little is known of Mackenzie, who was later described as 'shabbily dressed and dirty', with 'not at all the appearance of a Gentleman'. Miles Macdonell claimed that Mackenzie was a son-in-law of Collector Reid , adding that the Captain had been formerly Hudson's Bay Company



A number of factors resulted in pandemonium aboard the 'Edward & Anne'. Many H B C recruits went over the sides of the vessel into Captain Mackenzie's waiting boat; others left in the ship's boat. One man jumped into the sea and tried to swim to shore; he was fished out by Mackenzie. Painting by Rob Gillespie.

agent in Stornoway. Having been replaced by Robertson only a few months earlier, Mackenzie had no reason to feel well disposed to the Company, and if his livelihood was being gained by military crimping, he would have been a fool not to take advantage of the presence of 100 unattached, able-bodied, and discontented men landed fortuitously at his doorstep. The war with Napoleon was now eight years old, and eligible recruits were in short supply everywhere in the Highlands. The Hudson's Bay Company was, after all, competing with the government for manpower, and those involved in military recruiting were traditionally mortal enemies of any emigration to North America. With his own positive interests added to his grievances against the Company, Mackenzie's actions require no reference to a London conspiracy for explanation.

Mackenzie's chief target for recruiting became the *Edward & Anne*, anchored in the harbour with many of the new employees on board. The vessel itself was not up to Company standards, being old and badly fitted. Miles Macdonell had assigned most of the Glasgow writers to this ship, and had fitted up a place between the decks, where they were to lodge and mess among themselves. According to the subsequent testimony of the chief dissident among the clerks, this space was separated from the other passengers — Irish and Scots labourers — only by a sail fastened as a curtain from one side of the ship to the other. Understandably it was totally dark, and there were no mattresses or bedding, although hammocks were promised to the passengers. The clerks were most displeased with this accommodation, and remonstrated unsuccessfully with Macdonell about the promises made to them of cabin facilities.

On 25 July James Robertson and a clerk toured the ships to check the final muster of passengers, as they were obliged to do by the Emigration Act of 1803. They ran into no difficulties with the *Eddystone* and *Prince of Wales*, but the *Edward & Anne* was a different matter. Captain Mackenzie was circling the vessel in a boat loudly proclaiming that it was harbouring deserters from His Majesty's forces, and on board the Glasgow clerks especially were seething with self-righteous indignation. On the deck of the *Edward & Anne*, Robertson assembled the passengers and read the muster amidst a chorus of complaints about conditions. He explained the terms of the parliamentary legislation governing provisions (which had been made deliberately generous in order to frustrate emigration), and there were more voices raised in complaint about treatment. At this point, Robertson quite properly announced that no one was legally obliged to depart against his will, whatever contracts had been signed with the Company. Pandemonium then broke out, and many went over the sides of the vessel into Captain Mackenzie's waiting boat, while others left in the ship's boat. One man jumped into the sea and tried to swim for shore; he was fished out by Mackenzie. More men disappeared into Robertson's own boat, as the collector scurried to escape the melee. It should be emphasized that, contrary to the impression given by Miles Macdonell and Selkirk in the various accounts of this scene, the collector involved in the troubles on board the *Edward & Anne* was James Robertson, the Company's own agent, rather than John Reid.

Many of those absconding were ultimately recovered on the beach, and returned to the ship, it later was charged, with an absence of tender treatment. But Captain Hanwell decided he had experienced enough problems, and weighed anchor for the Bay early the next morning, without consulting with the customs officials any further. Collector Robertson managed to catch the departing vessels in his own boat to return two more of the missing men. One of the escaped Glasgow clerks, a young man named Moncreiff Blair, ultimately made his way to London, where, with the eager assistance of the friends of the North West Company, he instituted legal action against the Hudson's Bay Company for breach of contract. The result was more controversy in the *Inverness Journal*, which reprinted a lengthy affidavit from Blair and answering affidavits from Company people, especially the officers of the *Edward & Anne*. This exchange demonstrated that Blair had not been particularly badly treated, but that he certainly was not being offered the cabin accommodations and other amenities he claimed he had been promised.

News of the troubles over the Stornoway departure spread rapidly throughout the Highlands, thanks no doubt to the efforts of the North Westers. It was, as Miles Macdonell wrote his employer, 'a most unfortunate business'. But although the fur-trading enemies of the Hudson's Bay Company were pleased afterwards to publicize the affair, it would be quite wrong to attribute to them very much responsibility for its occurrence. Circumstances rather than conspiracies were at the root of the problem. At the same time, Miles Macdonell had not demonstrated any qualities of successful leadership in the affair.

He had stepped into an awkward situation at Stornoway not of his own making, but he had not managed to calm the discontent and win the recruits to his side. Perhaps success in such persuasion would be asking too much of Macdonell, but these sorts of problems would be endemic in the early days of the settlement of Red River, and he never succeeded in rising to the challenge. Clearly the North Westers would exploit any mistakes by Selkirk, his agents, and the Company, but the affair at Stornoway in 1811 provides little real evidence of any overt interference or conspiracy against Red River. ◆

CANADA:
A History in Photographs

By Roger Hall and Gordon Dodds. Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1981. 256 pp., illus. $24.95.

Reviewed by Donald Swainson

In 1978 Roger Hall and Gordon Dodds published *A Picture History of Ontario*. It included some 400 pictures that illustrated the history of Ontario from the late eighteenth century to the palmy days of Premier Leslie Frost. The excellent text and well selected illustrations focused on a theme that was both coherent and legitimate. Hall and Dodds explained Ontario by analyzing the characteristics of Old Ontario and explaining the extent to which those characteristics represent continuity in the province's history. The result was a highly successful book that stands as a first-rate interpretation of Canada's largest province.

The same authors have now presented us with *Canada: A History in Photographs*. It is similar in format to the earlier work, but there are some crucial differences. The Ontario volume used a wide variety of types of illustrative material; the present book includes only photographs. And, the 500 photographs in *Canada* are confined to the post-confederation period. No attempt is made to illustrate the history of those diverse communities that came together in 1867 to form the country. The decisions to exclude non-photographs and to limit the time-frame are no doubt explained by the vastly greater scope of *Canada*. Before making their final selection, the authors viewed some 1,000,000 prints and negatives, a statistic that makes those less resolute blanch. The photographs are well selected; many have never been published before and are quite splendid. The text is sprightly and interesting. This is an excellent book that deserves to be widely used.

However, it must be said that *Canada* is not nearly as satisfying as *Ontario*. The cause is the nature of Canada, or at least the view that many historians now hold concerning the nature of the country. Many of our historians adhere to the 'limited identities' school or advocate the 'new history'. Their concern tends to be the micro side of the equation. Hence they study regions, classes, ethnic groups, women, children, strikes, demography, native peoples, urban areas and so on. All of this is perfectly legitimate, but such historians (who normally eschew the study of politics) have not been able to produce a synthesis that can lead to a definition of Canada. Maurice Careless, one of the founders of the 'limited identities' school, recently reviewed the work of his colleagues in an article entitled 'Limited Identities — Ten Years Later' (*Manitoba History*, 1980). He noted: 'Altogether, limited identities threaten to take over, and settle the matter of a Canadian national identity by ending it outright, leaving perhaps a loose league of survivor states essentially existing on American outdoor relief.' Hall and Dodds have the same problem. In their concluding comment they note that Canada 'is, in fact, something less than the sum of its provincial parts'.

They identified with Ontario and saw the unity in its past. Their book on that province is warm and coherent. Clearly, they view Canada as a set of fragments that are greater as components than as an entity. *Canada: A History in Photographs* is not an interpretation of this country's past. It is not a coherent statement about Canada. Nonetheless, it is a first-class collection. Its 500 photographs tell us much about our country and provide an excellent introduction to the photograph as a tool in historical analysis.

Donald Swainson is a professor of history at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

Christmas at a prisoner-of-war camp, somewhere in Canada, 1916 (Public Archives of Canada, C-14104). From 'Canada: A History in Photographs'.

MILITARY UNIFORMS IN CANADA 1665-1970

By Jack L. Summers and Rene Chartrand. Illustrated by R. J. Marrion. Canadian War Museum, National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, 1981. 192 pp., illus. $29.95.

Reviewed by David Ross

This book is written by men known in the world of military uniform specialists for their meticulous expertise; it represents a milestone in the study of Canadian military dress. Despite Canada's strong military tradition, the number of books on its army's uniforms can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. *Military Uniforms in Canada 1665-1970* is a welcome addition to this sparsely populated bookshelf.

It is a beautifully produced book with forty colour reproductions by the noted British military artist, R. J. Marrion, whose knowledge of uniforms ensures that no significant detail of badge or button is omitted. Each colour plate is accompanied by a section on the history of the unit as well as a description of the uniform itself. The Canadian War Museum is to be congratulated on commissioning and publishing this magnificent source book.

The illogical neglect of this fascinating and socially significant subject appears to result from the assumption by textile curators and specialists that soldiers' clothing is intensely complicated and can be dismissed as a bygone form of fancy dress. Female clothing of all kinds and the remotest variation of peasant clothing is thought worthy of detailed study; uniforms are rather disdainfully left to regimental museums whose slender resources allow little time for research and publication. The relative ease with which paintings and photographs can be dated from details of uniforms shown in them, makes their study of vital interest to the researcher. Apart from the Canadian War Museum few of the major Canadian museums give any priority to the study and display of military uniforms.

The loss to the student of social history is serious. From the 1840s to 1914 the militia was an important level in the social structure. For officers especially, it offered a ladder for social advancement and a means of commitment to law and order. Men were willing to risk losing their jobs by taking time off for military duty; officers would spend large sums to purchase elaborate uniforms, correct in every detail, from tailors in London.

James Laver, the celebrated English authority on costume, has said that all clothing is designed with one or more of three functions in mind: the functional, the hierarchical and the seductive — in other words, to keep one warm and dry, to indicate one's status and to make the wearer attractive. In the full-dress era, uniforms would keep a soldier warm, often too warm, for they were tight fitting and made of heavy wool cloth. But tight and scratchy though they were, they were impressive (especially the more elaborate ones of the officers) and produced 'a fine figure of a man'. But the chief characteristic and purpose of a military uniform was to denote with great precision the rank and status of the wearer in an organization which depended for its success on the submission of the junior to the senior, and the instant recognition of the officer in command. With the introduction of campaign medals one could also read at a glance the salient details of the wearer's career. A uniform was the soldier's *curriculum vitae*.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, uniforms have undergone a metamorphosis. The introduction of high-powered rifles and machine guns accurate at long range forced the soldier to become inconspicuous on the battlefield. Prior to this, when armies could see each other at close range, an impressive and colourful uniform was considered necessary to intimidate and overawe one's opponent.

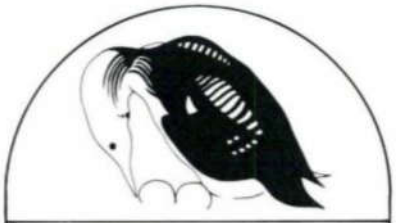
The evolution from the colourful to the drab is well illustrated throughout the book.

A liking for uniformity is not a normal human characteristic and the militia reports of the nineteenth century were full of complaints about units and soldiers adding some non-regulation touch to their uniforms. Regiments have always prized the particular distinctions of dress which set them apart from other soldiers. Over the years military units have become very expert at this form of sartorial guerilla warfare, and have fought to obtain or retain regimental distinction. *Military Uniforms in Canada 1665-1970* effectively illustrates the multiplicity and variation of uniforms which have resulted.

A review of this specialized book would not be complete without a little carping criticism. I cannot help regretting that there is a gap between 1816 and 1859 in the uniforms shown. This is unfortunate because the coatee of 1829 and the Regency shako, which are amongst the most elegant examples of military tailoring, are omitted.

This is a minor flaw in a fine book, whose functional layout and attractive appearance will appeal to the specialist and the general reader. One hopes that it is the first of a series of volumes on Canadian uniforms.

David Ross is director of the New Brunswick Museum and the author of several books on military uniforms.



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THE HAIDA INDIANS
Cultural Change Mainly Between 1876-1970

By J. H. van den Brink. Pub. E. J. Brill, Oude Rijn 33a, Leiden, The Netherlands, 1974. 275 pp., maps. 79 guilders (approx. $44).

Reviewed by Malvina Bolus

Although it was published some years ago, few copies of this book have come to Canada, which is a pity. Dr van den Brink has made a comprehensive ethno-historical study of the Haida which could save any student of these Queen Charlotte Islanders many weeks of research. The bibliography and footnotes give an idea of the amount of material here synthesized; to which research in London, in several Canadian cities, talks and continued correspondence with informants in Canada — Indians, civil servants, and ministers — and a visit to the Islands, all contribute.

Cultural changes are separated into four periods, actually beginning in 1774, dealing with Euro-American contact, trade and technology; internal relations; the potlatch and other cultural expressions (totem poles, for instance, were recorded from 1790 on); religion, and disease; interethnic relations. These subjects and more are followed through in the subsequent periods.

For the period between 1876 and 1900 there is treatment of settlements, handicrafts and art, games and feasts, reserves, relations with employers. This was the era of the missionaries: Anglican (tolerant and rather passive) with the northern Haida at Masset; Methodist (disapproving but stimulating) with the southern Haida at Skidegate. For a time they were the only non-Indian residents and their influence was considerable, largely in the sphere of education. In this period the divergence between the northern and southern Haida (gathered gradually into settlements at Masset and Skidegate respectively) became more noticeable. There was little communication between the two groups. The difference in temperament and characteristics between them, which becomes progressively more pronounced and is still evident, is a most interesting theme throughout this study. In this period came the liberation of slaves, and an alternative status symbol for chiefs became possession of a western house or modern boat. By 1900 the old-style potlatch had gone, followed by a new style with gravestones substituted for totem poles.

The turn of the century (the period 1900 to 1940) brought activity in more commercial fishery, canneries, real estate speculation, lumbering, and an influx of non-Indians. Government control, not missions, dominated life, and the number of Haidas began to increase. The estimated population of 6,000 in 1835 had been reduced to 800 fifty years later, through disease and firearms; this decimation left positions of rank open and claiming them led to increased ceremonial activity in potlatches and erection of totem poles. By 1915 there were only some 588 Haidas left. Western exploitation and Oriental competition created problems.

In the period 1940 to 1970 integrated schools and a confusing plethora of religious sects were introduced; from a very low ebb, outside interest in argillite carving slowly revived that art, and in 1960 the Haida were enfranchised to vote in federal elections. The disparity between Massets and Skidegates was still marked, particularly in their earnings. The Massets were withdrawn and seemed lethargic, resenting non-Indians. The Skidegates were assertive, progressive and community-minded; their co-operation with authorities led to mutual respect.

Dr Brink then analyses developments in modern times, when the increase in numbers of Indians in general exceeds the resources of reserves and lack of adequate education leaves a shortage of skilled people. In this chapter he draws heavily on the work of Professor H. B. Hawthorn.

A useful summary follows an 'Interpretation of the Changes' to complete the study. In the last decade there have been many more changes affecting the Indian people, but for basic information on the Haida this well written, well organized, informative book is worth the effort required to obtain it.

Malvina Bolus is the former editor of 'The Beaver'.

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On page 47, Winter 1981, right hand column: . . . when Munn's supply vessel, the *Albert* returned to Scotland in 1920-21, she had on board . . . two 'Lorry Load narwhal Ivory'. This should read: a 'Lorry Load narwhal Ivory'.

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